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THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

ROBERT SOUTHEY

EDITED BY HIS SON, THE

REV. CHARLES CUTHBERT SOUTHEY, M.A.

CURATE OF PLUMBLAND, CUMBERLAND

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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ROBERT SOUTHEY.

CHAPTER VI.

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THE commencement of the year 1799 found my father still at Westbury, and still employed at some one or other of his many literary avocations. I have not thought it needful to notice particularly the reception which his writings had hitherto met with from the public, because it was not of that peculiarly marked character which materially influences an author's career. He had, however, been gradually "working his way up the hill," and the booksellers

were ready enough to find him abundant periodical employment, which, though it "frittered away his time," and was but indifferently remunerated, he still found more profitable than any other way in which he could employ his pen. I cannot but regret that no list of his many contributions to magazines and reviews, and other periodicals, during his early life, can be found. Although the articles themselves might not be worth preservation, still, could the number of them be added to the rest of his works, especially taking into account his very numerous writings in the Annual and Quarterly Reviews, he would unquestionably be found to have been one of the most voluminous writers of any age or of any country. The following letters will give some idea of his untiring industry:—

To Thomas Southey.

"Jan. 5. 1799.

"My dear Tom,

"Ever since you left us have I been hurried from one job to another. You know I expected a parcel of books when you went away. They came, and I had immediately to kill off one detachment; that was but just done, when down came a bundle of French books, to be returned with all possible speed. This was not only unexpected work, but double work, because all extracts were to be translated. Well; that I did, and by that time the end of the month came round, and I am now busy upon English books

again. What with this and my weekly communications with Stuart*, and my plaguy regimen of exercise, I have actually no time for any voluntary employment. In a few days I hope to breathe a little in leisure.

"I am sorry it is low water with you, and that we cannot set you afloat. We are heavily laden, and can, with hard work, barely keep above water. I have been obliged to borrow; by and by we shall do better; but we are just now at the worst, and these vile taxes will take twenty pounds from me, at the least.

"We had an odd circumstance happened to us on Wednesday. Just as we were beginning breakfast, a well-dressed woman, in a silk gown and muff, entered the room. 'I am come to take a little breakfast,' said she. Down she laid her muff, took a chair, and sat down by the fire. We thought she was mad, but she looked so stupid, that we soon found that was not the case. Sure enough, breakfast she did. I was obliged once to go down and laugh. My mother and Edith behaved very well, but Margery could not come into the room. When the good lady had done, she rose, and asked what she had to pay? 'Nothing, ma'am,' said my mother. 'Nothing! why how is this?' 'I don't know how it is,' said my mother, and smiled; 'but so it is.' 'What, don't you keep a public?' 'No, indeed, ma'am;' so we had half a hundred apologies, and the servant had a shilling. We had a good morning's laugh for our-

* Editor of the Morning Post.

selves, and a good story for our friends, and she had a very good breakfast. I wish you had been here.

"Harry is going to a Mr. Maurice, a gentleman who takes only a few pupils, at Normanston, near Lowestoff, Suffolk. You may, perhaps, know Lowestoff, as the more easterly point of the island. It is a very fortunate situation for him.

"The frost has stopt the pump and the press. My letters are just done, but not yet published. Our bread has been so hard frozen, that no one in the house except myself could cut it, and it made my arm ache for the whole day.

"I do not know where Lloyd is; it is a long time since I have heard from him. Indeed, my own employments make me a vile correspondent.

"The Old Woman of Berkeley cuts a very respectable figure on horseback; and Beelzebub is so admirably done, that one would suppose he had sat for the picture.* . . . . . I know not how you exist this weather. My great coat is a lovely garment, my mother says; and but for it I should, I believe, be found on Durdham Down in the shape of a great icicle. At home the wind comes in so cuttingly in the evenings, that I have taken to wear my Welsh wig, to the great improvement of my personal charms! Edith says, I may say that.

"I shall make a ballad upon the story of your shipmate the marine†, who kept the fifth commandment so well. By the help of the Devil it will do;

* This engraving was copied from the Nuremberg Chronicle.

† This man persuaded his father to murder his mother, and then turned king's evidence, and brought his father to the gallows.

and there can be no harm in introducing him to the Devil a little before his time. God bless you

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

"A happy new year."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Jan. 9. 1799.

"My dear Wynn,

"As for the verses upon Mr. Pitt, I never wrote any. Possibly Lewis may have seen a poem by Coleridge, which I have heard of, but have never seen — a dialogue between Blood, Fire, and Famine, or some such interlocutors.* Strangers are perpetually confounding us.

"My Eclogues, varying in subject, are yet too monotonous, in being all rather upon melancholy subjects.

"I have some play plots maturing in my head, but none ripe. My wish is to make something better than love the mainspring; and I have one or two sketches, but all my plots seem rather calculated to produce one or two great scenes, rather than a general effect. My mind has been turned too much to the epic, which admits a longer action, and passes over the uninteresting parts.

"The escape of the Pythoness with a young Thessalian seems to afford most spectacle. If you have Diodorus Siculus at hand, and will refer to lib. 16.

* "Fire, Famine, Slaughter," was the title of this poem.

p. 428., you may find all the story, for I know no more than the fact.

"Pedro the Just pleases me best. This is my outline — You know one of Inez' murderers escaped — Pacheco. This man has, by lightning or in battle, lost his sight, and labours under the agony of remorse. The priest, to whom he has confessed, enjoins him to say certain prayers where he committed the murder. Thus disfigured, he ran little danger of discovery; what he did run, enhanced their merits. A high reward has been offered for Pacheco, and the confessor sends somebody to inform against him and receive it.

"Leonora, his daughter, comes to Coimbra to demand justice. Her mother's little property has been seized by a neighbouring noble, who trusts to the hatred Pedro bears the family, and their depressed state, for impunity. This, too, may partly proceed from Leonora having refused to be his mistress. A good scene may be made when she sees the king, and he thinks she is going to intreat for her father; but Pedro was inflexibly just, and he summons the nobleman.

"Pacheco is thrown into prison. The nobleman, irritated at the king, is still attached to Leonora. He is not a bad man, though a violent one. He offers to force the prison, deliver Pacheco, and retire into Castille, if she will be his. The king's confessor intercedes for Pacheco, but his execution is fixed for the day when Inez is to be crowned. At the decisive moment, Leonora brings the children of Inez to intercede, and is successful. She refuses to marry the

noble, and expresses her intention of entering a nunnery after her mother's death.

"This is a half plot—you see capable of powerful scenes—but defective in general interest, I fear.

"I have thought of a domestic story, founded on the persecution under Queen Mary. To this my objection is, that I cannot well conclude it without either burning my hero, or making the queen die very *à propos*—which is cutting the knot, and not letting the catastrophe necessarily arise from previous circumstances. However, the story pleases me, because I have a fine Catholic woman and her confessor in it.

"For feudal times, something may be made, perhaps, of a feif with a wicked lord, or of the wardship oppressions; but what will young Colman's play be? It may forestall me. . . .

"Then I have thought of Sparta, of the Crypteia, and a Helot hero; but this would be interpreted into sedition. Of Florida, and the customary sacrifice of the first-born male: in this case to have a European father, and an escape. Sebastian comes into my thoughts; and Beatrix of Milan, accused by Orombello on the rack, and executed. A Welsh or English story would be better; but, fix where I will, I will be well acquainted with country, manners, &c. God bless you. You have these views as they float before me, and will be as little satisfied with any as myself. Help me if you can.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"January 21. 1729.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"You ask me why the Devil rides on horseback.* The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman, and that would be reason enough; but, moreover, the history doth aver that he came on horseback for the old woman, and rode before her, and that the colour of the horse was black. Should I falsify the history, and make Apollyon a pedestrian? Besides, Grosvenor, Apollyon is cloven-footed; and I humbly conceive that a biped — and I never understood his dark majesty to be otherwise — that a biped, I say, would walk clumsily upon cloven feet. Neither hath Apollyon wings, according to the best representations; and, indeed, how should he? For were they of feathers, like the angels, they would be burned in the everlasting fire; and were they of leather, like a bat's, they would be shrivelled. I conclude, therefore, that wings he hath not. Yet do we find, from sundry reputable authors and divers histories, that he transporteth himself from place to place with exceeding rapidity. Now, as he cannot walk fast or fly, he must have some conveyance. Stage coaches to the infernal regions there are none,

* The allusion here is to the illustration of my father's "pithy and profitable" ballad of the "Old Woman of Berkeley," which is referred to in the last letter but one. It seems that Mr. Bedford, whose humour on such subjects tallied exactly with his own, had questioned the propriety of the portraiture.

though the road be much frequented. Balloons would burst at setting out, the air would be so rarified with the heat; but horses he may have of a particular breed.

"I am learned in Dæmonology, and could say more; but this sufficeth. I should advise you not to copy the ballad, because the volume will soon be finished. I expect to bring it with me on Ash-Wednesday to town. . . . . .

"I am better, but they tell me that constant exercise is indispensable, and that at my age, and with my constitution, I must either throw off the complaint now, or it will stick to me for ever. Edith's health requires care; our medical friend dreads the effect of London upon both. When my time is out in our present house (at Midsummer), we must go to the sea awhile. I thought I was like a Scotch fir, and could grow anywhere, but I am sadly altered, and my nerves are in a vile state. I am almost ashamed of my own feelings, but they depend not upon volition. These things throw a fog over the prospect of life. I cannot see my way; it is time to be in an office, but the confinement would be ruinous. You know not the alteration I feel. I could once have slept with the seven sleepers without a miracle; now the least sound wakes me, and with alarm. However, I am better. . . . . God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To John May, Esq.

"Jan. 22. 1799.

"My dear Friend,

"Since my last my dramatic ideas have been fermenting, and have now, perhaps, settled — at least, among my various thoughts and outlines there is one which pleases me, and with which Wynn seems well satisfied. I am not willing to labour in vain, and before I begin I would consult well with him and you, the only friends who know my intention. The time chosen is the latter part of Queen Mary's reign: the characters, — Sir Walter, a young convert to the Reformation; Gilbert, the man who has converted him; Stephen, the cousin of Sir Walter, and his heir in default of issue, a bigoted Catholic; Mary, the betrothed of Walter, an amiable Catholic; and her Confessor, a pious excellent man. Gilbert is burnt, and Walter, by his own enthusiasm, and the bigotry and interested hopes of his cousin, condemned, but saved by the Queen's death. The story thus divides itself: — 1. To the discovery of Walter's principles to Mary and the Confessor. 2. The danger he runs by his attentions to the accused Gilbert. 3. Gilbert's death. 4. Walter's arrest. 5. The death of the Queen. In Mary and her Confessor I design Catholics of the most enlarged minds, sincere but tolerating, and earnest to save Walter, even to hastening his marriage, that the union with a woman of such known sentiments might divert suspicion. Gilbert is a sincere but bigoted man, one of the old reformers, ready to suffer death for his opinions, or

to inflict it. Stephen, so violent in his hate of heresy as half to be ignorant of his own interested motives in seeking Walter's death. But it is from delineating the progress of Walter's mind that I expect success. At first he is restless and unhappy, dreading the sacrifices which his principles require; the danger of his friend and his death excite an increasing enthusiasm; the kindness of the priest, and Mary's love, overcome him; he consents to temporise, and is arrested; then he settles into the suffering and steady courage of a Christian. To this I feel equal, and long to be about it. I expect a good effect from the evening hymn to be sung by Mary, and from the death of Gilbert. From the great window, Mary and the Confessor see the procession to the stake, and hear the *Te Deum*; they turn away when the fire is kindled, and kneel together to pray for his soul; the light of the fire appears through the window, and Walter is described as performing the last office of kindness to his martyred friend. You will perceive that such a story can excite only good feelings; its main tendency will be to occasion charity towards each other's opinions. The story has the advantage of novelty; the only martyrdom-plays I know are mixed with much nonsense — the best is Corneille's 'Polyeucte;' in English we have two bad ones from Massinger and Dryden. When I see you I will tell you more; the little thoughts for minute parts, which are almost too minute to relate formally in a letter.

"I come to town the week after next again: the thought of the journey is more tolerable, as I expect relief from the exercise, for very great exercise is

necessary. I do not, and will not, neglect my health, though it requires a very inconvenient attention. My medical guide tells me that, with my habits, the disorder must be flung off now, or it will adhere to me through life. God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

My father's health still continued in a very unsatisfactory state, although he was less alarmed about it himself than he had been a short time previously. In reply to some anxious inquiries from his friend William Taylor, who, with a singular misapprehension of his character, tells him that he has a "mimosa sensibility, an imagination excessively accustomed to summon up trains of melancholy ideas, and marshal funeral processions; a mind too fond by half, for its own comfort, of sighs and sadness, of pathetic emotion and heart-rending woe;" he says: — "Burnett has mistaken my complaint, and you have mistaken my disposition. I was apprehensive of some local complaint of the heart, but there is no danger of its growing too hard, and the affection is merely nervous. The only consequence which there is any reason to dread is, that it may totally unfit me for the confinement of London and a lawyer's office. I shall make the attempt somewhat heartlessly, and discouraged by the prognostics of my medical advisers. If my health suffer, I will abandon it at once. The world will be again before me, and the prospect sufficiently comfortable. I have no wants, and few wishes. Literary exertion is almost as necessary to me as meat and

drink, and with an undivided attention I could do much.

"Once, indeed, I had a mimosa sensibility, but it has long ago been rooted out. Five years ago I counteracted Rousseau by dieting upon Godwin and Epictetus; they did me some good, but time has done more. I have a dislike to all strong emotion, and avoid whatever could excite it. A book like Werter gives me now unmingled pain. In my own writings you may observe I dwell rather upon what affects than what agitates."*

Notwithstanding the little encouragement my father found to continuing the study of the law, both from the state of his health, and the peculiar inaptitude of his mind to retain its technicalities, even though, at the time of reading, it fully apprehended them, he still thought it right to continue to keep his terms at Gray's Inn, and early in May went up to London for that purpose. Here his friends had now become numerous, and he had to hurry from one to another with so little cessation, that his visits there were always a source of more fatigue than pleasure. His great delight was the old book-stalls, and his chief anxiety to be at home again.

"At last, my dear Edith," he writes the day after his arrival, "I sit down to write to you in quiet and with something like comfort. . . . . My morning has been spent pleasantly, for it has been spent alone in the library; the hours so employed pass rapidly enough, but I grow more and more homesick like a

* March 12. 1799.

spoilt child. On the 29th you may expect me. Term opens on the 26th; after eating my third dinner I can drive to the mail, and thirteen shillings will be well bestowed in bringing me home four-and-twenty hours earlier—it is not above sixpence an hour, Edith, and I would gladly purchase an hour at home now at a much higher price. . . . . .

. . . . . .

My stall-hunting, the great and only source of my enjoyment in London, has been tolerably successful. I have picked up an epic poem in French, on the Discovery of America, which will help out the notes of Madoc; another on the American Revolution, the Alaric, and an Italian one, of which I do not know the subject, for the title does not explain it; also I have got Astræa, the whole romance, a new folio, almost a load for a porter, and the print delightfully small—fine winter evenings' work: and I have had self-denial enough—admire me, Edith!—to abstain from those books till my return, that I may lose no time in ransacking the library.

"I met Stuart one day, luckily, as it saved me a visit. To-morrow must be given up to writing for him, as he has had nothing since I came to town. The more regularly these periodical works are done, the easier they are to do. I have had no time since I left home: in fact I can do nothing as it should be done anywhere else.

". . . . . Do not suppose I have forgotten to look out for a book for you; to-day I saw a set of Florian, which pleases me, unless a better can be found.

Do you know that I am truly and actually learning Dutch, to read Jacob Cats. You will, perhaps, be amused at a characteristic trait in that language: other people say, I pity; but the Dutch verb is, I pity myself."

The two following letters were also written during this absence from home.

To Mrs. Southey.

"Brixton, May 9. 1799.

"Your letter, my dear Edith, reached me not till late last evening, and it could hardly have arrived more opportunely, for it was on my return from a visit to Mr. ——, that I found it. We had dined there; B., and C., and I, with fourteen people, all of whom were completely strange to me, and most of whom I hope and trust will remain so. There were some blockheads there, one of whom chose to be exposed, by engaging in some classical and historical disputes with me; another gave as a toast General Suwarrow, the man who massacred men, women and children for three successive days at Warsaw, who slew at Ockzakow thirty thousand persons in cold blood, and thirty thousand at Ismael. I was so astonished at hearing this demon's name, as only to repeat it in the tone of wonder; but, before I had time to think or to reply, C. turned to the man who gave the toast, and said he would not drink General Suwarrow, and off we set, describing the man's actions till they gave up all defence, and asked for some substituted

name; and Carlisle changed him for Count Rumford. It was a hateful day; the fellows would talk politics, of which they knew nothing. . . . . After being so put to the torture for five hours, your letter was doubly welcome.

. . . . . .

"G. Dyer is foraging for my Almanac, and promises pieces from Mrs. Opie, Mr. Mott of Cambridge, and Miss Christall. I then went to Arch's, a pleasant place for half an hour's book news: you know he purchased the edition of the Lyrical Ballads; he told me he believed he should lose by them, as they sold very heavily. . . . . My books sell very well. Other book news have I none, except, indeed, that John Thelwall is writing an epic poem, and Samuel Rogers is also writing an epic poem; George Dyer, also, hath similar thoughts. . . . . William Taylor has written to me from Norwich, and sent me Bodmer's Noah, the book that I wanted to poke through and learn German by. He tempts me to write upon the subject, and take my seat with Milton and Klopstock; and in my to-day's walk so many noble thoughts for such a poem presented themselves, that I am half tempted, and have the Deluge floating in my brain with the Dom Daniel and the rest of my unborn family.

"

. . . . . .

As we went to dinner yesterday a coachful of women drew up to the door at the moment we arrived there; it rained merrily, and Carlisle offered his umbrella, but the prim gentry were somewhat rudely shy of him and me too, for his hair was a little ragged, and

I had not silk stockings on. He made them ashamed of this at dinner. Never did you see anything so hideous as their dresses; they were pink muslin, with round little white spots, waists ever so far down, and buttoned from the neck down to the end of the waist. . . . . .

. . . . . .

Horne Tooke's letter to the Income Commissioners has amused me very much: he had stated his under sixty pounds a year; they said they were not satisfied; and his reply begins by saying he has much more reason to be dissatisfied with the smallness of his income than they have.

. . . .

"God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

My father was now, much to his regret, compelled to quit his house at Westbury; and Burton, in Hampshire, being the place which, next to Bristol, he had found in all respects best suited to him, he went thither to look for a house, and with some difficulty succeeded in procuring one, but not being able to obtain immediate possession, the intervening time, after a short interval, was passed in an excursion into Devonshire. Of these movements the following letters give an account: —

To Grosvenor Bedford, Esq.

"Bristol, June 5. 1799.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Here is de koele June — we have a March wind howling, and a March fire burning — it is *diabolus dies*. On my journey I learnt one piece of information, which you may profit by: that on Sunday night they put the new horses into the mail always, because as they carry no letters, an accident is of less consequence as to the delay it occasions. This nearly broke our necks, for we narrowly escaped an overturn; so I travel no more on a Sunday night in the mail.

"

. . . . . .

I am the better for my journey, and inclined to attribute it to the greater quantity of wine I drank at Brixton than I had previously done; therefore I have supplied the place of æther by the grape-juice, and supplied the place of the tablespoon by the corkscrew. I find printer's faith as bad as Punic faith. New types have been promised from London for some weeks, and are not yet arrived, therefore I am still out of the press. I pray you to send me the old woman who was circularised,

who saw her own back, whose head was like the title-page of a Jew's prayer-book, who was an emblem of eternity, the omikron of old women. You will make a good ballad of this quaint tale; it is for subjects

allied to humour or oddity that you possess most power. . . . . .
Find such subjects, and you will find pleasure in writing in proportion as you feel your own strength. I will at my first leisure transcribe for you St. Anthony and the Devil.

"The time of removal is so near at hand, that I begin to wish every thing were settled and over. This is a place which I leave with some reluctance after taking root here for twenty-five years, and now our society is so infinitely mended.

"Davy, the Pneumatic Institution experimentalist, is a first-rate man, conversable on all subjects, and learnable-from (which, by the by, is as fine a Germanly compounded word as you may expect to see). I am going to breathe some wonder-working gas, which excites all possible mental and muscular energy, and induces almost a delirium of pleasurable sensations without any subsequent dejection.

". . . . . .
I was fortunate enough to meet Sharpe, of whom you said so much, on the Sunday that I left Brixton. I was with Johnson in the King's Bench when he came in; I missed his name as he entered, but was quite surprised at the novelty and good sense of all his remarks. He talked on many subjects, and on all with a strength and justness of thought which I have seldom heard; the meeting pleased me much. I wish much to see more of Sharpe; he seems a man whom it would be impossible not to profit by. He talked of Combe, who is in the King's Bench. You said that Combe wrote books which were not known to be his.

Sharpe mentioned as his, Lord Lyttleton's Letters, many of Sterne's Letters, and Æneas Anderson's Account of China. God bless you!

Yours affectionately,
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

To Thomas Southey.

"Friday, July 12. 1799.

"My dear Tom,

"I write to you from Danvers's, where we are and have been since we left Westbury. I have been to Biddlecombe's*, and surveyed Southey Palace that is to be. We shall not get possession till Michaelmas. The place will be comfortable; the garden is large, but unstocked, with a fish-pond and a pigeon-house. My mother is in the College Green. Edith and I are going into Devonshire, first to the north coast, Minehead, the Valley of Stones, and Ilfracombe, the wildest part of the country; perhaps we may cross over to the south on our way to Burton. I wish to see Lightfoot at Kingsbridge, and there would be a likelihood of seeing you.

"My miscellaneous volume, which is to be christened Annual Poems, comes on rapidly; they are now striking off the eleventh sheet.

"Yesterday I finished Madoc, thank God! and thoroughly to my own satisfaction; but I have resolved on one great, laborious, and radical alteration. It was my design to identify Madoc with Mango

* The name of a friend residing at Christchurch, Hampshire.

Capac, the legislator of Peru: in this I have totally failed, therefore Mango Capac is to be the hero of another poem; and instead of carrying Madoc down the Marānon, I shall follow the more probable opinion and land him in Florida: here, instead of the Peruvians, who have no striking manners for my poem, we get among the wild North American Indians; on their customs and superstitions, facts must be grounded, and woven into the work, spliced so neatly as not to betray the junction. These alterations I delay. . . . So much for Madoc; it is a great work done, and my brain is now ready to receive the Dom Daniel, the next labour in succession. Of the metre of this poem I have thought much, and my final resolution is to write it irregularly, without rhymes: for this I could give you reasons in plenty; but, as you cannot lend me your ear, we will defer it till you hear the poem. This work is intended for immediate publication.

"My first poems are going to press for a third edition; by the time they are completed, I shall probably have a second volume of the Annual Poems ready; and so I and the printers go merrily on.

"Oh, Tom! such a gas has Davy discovered, the gaseous oxyde! Oh, Tom! I have had some; it made me laugh and tingle in every toe and finger tip. Davy has actually invented a new pleasure, for which language has no name. Oh, Tom! I am going for more this evening; it makes one strong, and so happy! so gloriously happy! and without any after-debility, but, instead of it, increased strength of mind and body. Oh, excellent air-bag! Tom, I am

sure the air in heaven must be this wonder-working gas of delight!

Yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John May, Esq.

"My dear Friend,

" . . . . .

My walk to Ilfracombe led me through Lynmouth, the finest spot, except Cintra and the Arrabida, that I ever saw. Two rivers join at Lynmouth. You probably know the hill streams of Devonshire: each of these flows down a coombe, rolling down over huge stones like a long waterfall; immediately at their junction they enter the sea, and the rivers and the sea make but one sound of uproar. Of these coombes the one is richly wooded, the other runs between two high, bare, stony hills. From the hill between the two is a prospect most magnificent; on either hand, the coombes and the river before the little village. The beautiful little village, which, I am assured by one who is familiar with Switzerland, resembles a Swiss village, — this alone would constitute a view beautiful enough to repay the weariness of a long journey; but, to complete it, there is the blue and boundless sea, for the faint and feeble line of the Welsh coast is only to be seen on the right hand if the day be perfectly clear. Ascending from Lynmouth up a road of serpentining perpendicularity,

you reach a lane which by a slight descent leads to the Valley of Stones, a spot which, as one of the greatest wonders indeed in the West of England, would attract many visitors if the roads were passable by carriages. Imagine a narrow vale between two ridges of hills somewhat steep: the southern hill turfed; the vale which runs from east to west, covered with huge stones and fragments of stones among the fern that fills it; the northern ridge completely bare, excoriated of all turf and all soil, the very bones and skeleton of the earth; rock reclining upon rock, stone piled upon stone, a huge and terrific mass. A palace of the Preadamite kings, a city of the Anakim, must have appeared so shapeless, and yet so like the ruins of what had been shaped after the waters of the flood subsided. I ascended with some toil the highest point; two large stones inclining on each other formed a rude portal on the summit: here I sat down; a little level platform, about two yards long, lay before me, and then the eye immediately fell upon the sea, far, very far below. I never felt the sublimity of solitude before. . . . .

"Of Beddoes you seem to entertain an erroneous opinion. Beddoes is an experimentalist in cases where the ordinary remedies are notoriously, and fatally, inefficacious: if you will read his late book on consumption, you will see his opinion upon this subject; and the book is calculated to interest unscientific readers, and to be of use to them. The faculty dislike Beddoes, because he is more able, and more successful, and more celebrated, than themselves, and because he labours to reconcile the art of

healing with common sense, instead of all the parade of mystery with which it is usually enveloped. Beddoes is a candid man, trusting more to facts than reasonings: I understand him when he talks to me, and, in case of illness, should rather trust myself to his experiments than be killed off *secundem artem*, and in the ordinary course of practice. . . . .

"God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Joseph Cottle.

"Exeter, Sept. 22. 1799.

"My dear Cottle,

"You will, I hope, soon have a cargo to send me of your own (for the 2d vol. of the Anthology), and some from Davy. If poor Mrs. Yearsley were well, I should like much to have her name there. . . . . As yet, I have only Coleridge's pieces and my own, amounting in the whole to some eighty or one hundred pages.

"Thalaba the Destroyer is progressive. There is a poem called '*Gebir*,' of which I know not whether my review be yet printed (in the Critical), but in that review you will find some of the most exquisite poetry in the language. The poem is such as Gilbert*, if he were only half as mad as he is, could have written. I would go an hundred miles to see the anonymous author.

* Author of "The Hurricane."

"My other hard work now is gutting the libraries here, and laying in a good stock of notes and materials, arranged in a way that would do honour to any old batchelor. Thalaba will be very rich in notes. . . . . .

"There are some *Johnobines* in Exeter, with whom I have passed some pleasant days. It is the filthiest place in England; a gutter running down the middle of every street and lane. We leave it on Monday week, and I shall rejoice to taste fresh air and feel settled. Exeter, however, has the very best collection of books for sale of any place out of London; and that made by a man who some few years back was worth nothing: Dyer, — not Woolmer, whose catalogue you showed me. Dyer himself is a thinking, extraordinary man, of liberal and extraordinary talents for his circumstances. I congratulate you on being out of bookselling; it did not suit you. Would that we authors had one bookseller at our direction, instead of one bookseller directing so many authors!

"My list of title-pages increases. I have lately made up my mind to undertake one great historical work, the History of Portugal; but for this, and for many other noble plans, I want uninterrupted leisure time, wholly my own, and not frittered away by little periodical employments. . . . .

"God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To S. T. Coleridge.

"Exeter, Oct. 3. 1799.

"Bonaparte was remarkably studious, and mathematics his particular study. He associated little, or not at all, with the other officers, and in company was reserved and silent. This is Mrs. Keenan's account, to whom I looked up with more respect because the light of his countenance had shone upon her. Banfill tells me that the mathematical tutor of Bonaparte is in Exeter — an emigrant. He says that he was an excellent mathematician — in the military branch chiefly — and that he was always the great man, always the first, always Bonaparte. . . .

"Jackson has taste to a certain extent. . . . His music I take for granted; his pictures are always well conceived, the creations of a man of genius; but he cannot execute; his trees are like the rustic work in a porter's lodge, sea-weed landscapes, cavern drippings chiselled into ramifications — cold, cramp, stiff, stony. I thank him for his 'Four Ages.' A man with a name may publish such a book; but when a book is merely a lounging collection of scraps, the common-place book printed, one wishes it to hold more than half an hour's turning over, a little turtle soup and a little pine-apple; but one wants a huge basin of broth and plenty of filberts. . . . . I soon talked of Bampfylde*, and Jackson rose in my

* I might have hesitated in publishing this melancholy account of poor Bampfylde's private history, had it not already been related in the Autobiography of Sir Egerton Brydges.

esteem, for he talked of him till I saw the tears. I have copied one ode, in imitation of Gray's Alcaic, and nineteen sonnets. After I had done, Jackson required a promise that I would communicate no copy, as he was going to publish them. He read me the preface; it will tell you what a miraculous musician Bampfylde was, and that he died insane; but it will not tell you Bampfylde's history.

"His wish was to live in solitude and write a play. From his former lodging near Chudley, often would he come to town in winter before Jackson was up — and Jackson is an early riser — ungloved, open-breasted, with a pocket-full of music, and poems, to know how he liked them. His *friends* — plague on the word — his relations, I mean, thought this was a sad life for a man of family, so they drove him to London. 'Poor fellow!' said Jackson, 'there did not live a purer creature; and if they would have let him alone, he might have been alive now. In London his feelings took a wrong course, and he paid the price of debauchery.'

"His sixteen printed sonnets are dedicated to Miss Palmer, now Lady Inchiquin, a niece of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Her he was madly in love with. Whether Sir J. opposed this match on account of Bampfylde's own irregularities in London, or of the hereditary insanity, I know not; but this was the commencement of his madness. On being refused admittance at Sir Joshua's, he broke the windows, and was taken to Newgate! Some weeks after, Jackson, on knowing of what had passed, went to London, and inquired

for Bampfylde. Lady B., his mother, said she knew little of him; she had got him out of Newgate; he was in some beggarly place. 'Where?' In King Street, Holborn, she believed, but did not know the number. Away went Jackson, and knocked at every door till he found the right. It was a miserable place. The woman of the house was one of the worst class of women in London. She knew B. had no money, and that he had been there three days without food. Jackson found him with the levity of derangement; his shirt-collar black and ragged — his beard of two months' growth. He said he was come to breakfast, and turned to a harpsichord in the room, literally, he said, to let B. gorge himself without being noticed. He took him away, gave his mother a severe lecture, and left him in decent lodgings and with a decent allowance, earnestly begging him to write. He never wrote. The next news was his confinement, and Jackson never saw him more. Almost the last time they met, he showed him several poems; among others a ballad on the murder of David Rizzio. 'Such a ballad!' said J. He came to J. to dinner, and was asked for copies. 'I burnt them,' was the reply; 'you did not seem to like them, and I wrote them to please you, so I burnt them.' After twenty years' confinement his senses returned, but he was dying in a consumption. He was urged by his apothecary to leave the house in Sloane Street, where he was well treated, and go into Devonshire. 'Your Devonshire friends will be very glad to see you.' He immediately hid his face. 'No, sir,' said he, 'they who

knew me what I was, shall never see me what I am.

Yours affectionately,
R. S."

To S. T. Coleridge.

"Christ Church. [No date.]

"I went to the Chapter Coffee-house Club. A man read an essay upon the comparative evils of savage and civilised society; and he preferred the first because it had not the curses of government and religion! He had never read Rousseau. What amused me was to find him mistaken in every fact he adduced respecting savage manners. I was going to attack him, but perceived that a visitor was expected to be silent. They elected me a member of one of these meetings, which I declined. . . . .

"A friend of Wordsworth's has been uncommonly kind to me — Basil Montague. He offered me his assistance as a special pleader, and said, if he could save me 100 guineas, it would give him more than 100 guineas' worth of pleasure. I did thank him, which was no easy matter; but I have been told that I never thank anybody for a civility, and there are very few in this world who can understand silence. However, I do not expect to use his offer: his papers which he offered me to copy will be of high service. Tell Wordsworth this.

"I commit wilful murder on my own intellect by

drudging at law; but trust the guilt is partly expiated by the candle-light hours allotted to Madoc. That poem advances very slowly. I am convinced that the best way of writing is, to write rapidly, and correct at leisure. Madoc would be a better poem if written in six months, than if six years were devoted to it. However, I am satisfied with what is done, and my outline for the whole is good.

"God bless you.

R. S."

To Thomas Southey,

Sylph Brig.

"Burton, October 25. 1799.

"My dear Tom,

"For these last three weeks you have been 'poor Tom,' and we have been lamenting the capture of the Sylph, and expecting a letter from you, dated 'Ferrol.' The newspapers said you had been captured and carried in there; and I have written word to Lisbon, and my uncle was to write to Jardine, at Corunna; and my mother has been frightened lest you should have been killed in an action previous to your capture;—and after all it is a lie!

"Five weeks were we at Exeter. I wrote to you, directing Torbay, and I walked round Torbay. You cruised at an unlucky time. However, if you have picked up an hundred pounds, I am glad we did not meet. We are in Hampshire, and shall get into our

palace on Wednesday next. You will direct as formerly — Burton, near Ringwood. So much hope had I of seeing you when I walked down to Dartmouth, and round by Brixham and the bay, that I put the Annual Anthology and the concluding books of Madoc in my knapsack for you.

"Our dwelling is now in a revolutionary state, and will, I hope, be comfortable. Small it is, and somewhat quaint, but it will be clean; and there is a spare bed-room, and a fish-pond, and a garden, in which I mean to work wonders: and then my book-room is such a room, that, like the Chapter House at Salisbury, it requires a column to support the roof.

"But you ought to have been taken, Tom; for consider how much uneasiness has been thrown away; and here were we, on seeing your hand-writing, expecting a long and lamentable, true and particular, account of the loss of the Ville de Paris, the lapelles, the new shirts, books, and all the lieutenant paraphernalia; and then comes a pitiful account of a cruise, and 100*l.* prize-money, instead of all these adventures!

"There was my mother working away to make a new shirt, thinking you would come home shirtless, breechesless, all oil, one great flea-bite, and able to talk Spanish.

"I have no news to tell, except that we expect Harry home for the Christmas holidays. Concerning my own employment, the Dom Daniel romance is rechristened, anabaptized Thalaba the Destroyer,

and the fifth book is begun; this I should like to show you. . . . . God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY"

My father had now, as he hoped, fairly settled himself for a time. He had revolutionised two adjoining cottages into a dwelling-house, and, at some inconvenience, had got his books about him, for already he had collected far more than were easily either moved or accommodated, though far fewer than he either wished or required. In this respect, indeed, the old proverb of "a rolling stone" was wholly inapplicable to him; and the number that accumulated made every new movement more troublesome and more expensive.

But he was not yet destined to find a "rest for the sole of his foot." Hardly was his new home cleared from "the deal shavings and the brick and mortar," than he was laid prostrate by severe illness — "so reduced by a nervous fever as to be able neither to read nor write;" and, on partially recovering from this attack, the uneasy feelings about his heart which he had before experienced, returned with so much force, as to compel him at once to repair to Bristol, for abler advice than the retired neighbourhood of Burton afforded. From thence he writes to Mr. Bedford and Mr. Coleridge.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Kingsdown, Bristol, Dec. 21. 1799.

"Grosvenor, I think seriously of going abroad. My complaint, so I am told by the opinion of many medical men, is wholly a diseased sensibility (mind you, physical sensibility), disordering the functions, now of the heart, now of the intestines, and gradually debilitating me. Climate is the obvious remedy. In my present state, to attempt to undergo the confinement of legal application were actual suicide. I am anxious to be well, and to attempt the profession: *much* in it I shall never do: sometimes my principles stand in my way, sometimes the want of readiness which I felt from the first — a want which I always know in company, and never in solitude and silence. Howbeit, I will make the attempt; but mark you, if by stage writing, or any other writing, I can acquire independence, I will not make the sacrifice of happiness it will inevitably cost me. I love the country, I love study — devotedly I love it; but in legal studies it is only the subtlety of the mind that is exercised. However, I need not philippicise, and it is too late to veer about. In '96 I might have chosen physic, and succeeded in it. I caught at the first plank, and missed the great mast in my reach; perhaps I may enable myself to swim by and by. Grosvenor, I have nothing of what the world calls ambition. I never thought it possible that I could be a great lawyer; I should as soon expect to be the man

in the moon. My views were bounded — my hope to an income of 500*l.* a year, of which I could lay by half to effect my escape with. *Possibly* the stag may exceed this. . . . I am not indolent; I loath indolence; but, indeed, reading law is laborious in dolence — it is thrashing straw. I have read, an read, and read; but the devil a bit can I remember I have given all possible attention, and attempted t command volition. No! The eye read, the lips pro nounced, I understood and re-read it; it was ver clear; I remembered the page, the sentence, — bu close the book, and all was gone! Were I an inde pendent man, even on less than I now possess, should long since have made the blessed bonfire, an rejoiced that I was free and contented. . . . . .

"I suffer a good deal from illness, and in a wa hardly understandable by those in health. I star from sleep as if death had seized me. I am sensibl of every pulsation, and compelled to attend to the mo tion of my heart till that attention disturbs it. Th pain in my side is, I think, lessened, nor do I at al think it was consumption; organic affection it coul not have been, else it had been constant; and a hear disease would not have been perceived *there*. I mus go abroad, and recruit under better skies. Not t Lisbon: I will see something new, and something better than the Portuguese. Ask Duppa abou Italy, about Trieste, and the way through Vienna and say something to him on my part expressive o respect — of a wish one day to see more of him.

"But of these plans you shall know more whe they are more moulded into form. In the meantim

I must raise the supplies, and for this purpose there is Thalaba. My expedition will not be a ruinous one, and it shall be as economical as it ought. I will at least return wiser, if not better.

"But now for more immediate affairs. The Anthology prospers. Send me something. O for another parody, such as 'The Rhedycinian Barbers'—a ballad good as 'The Circular Old Woman.'* There is a poem called Gebir, written by God knows who, sold for a shilling: it has miraculous beauties; and the Bishop of St. Giles's said the best poems in the Anthology were by Mrs. Opie and George Dyer! and he writes reviews!

"I expect to see my brother Henry to-morrow, after twenty months' absence. He is now sixteen, and promises much. If I go abroad, I shall make every effort to take him with me. Tom is cruising, and, I think, likely to rise in his profession.

. . . . .

Yours, ever the same,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Bristol, Dec. 27. 1799.

"Geese were made to grow feathers, and farmers' wives to pluck them. I suspect booksellers and

* There is no trace of this ballad to be found. Who can tell the history of this mysterious rotundity? See p. 18.

authors were made with something of the like first cause. With Thalaba I must make sure work and speedy, for abroad I *must* go. Complaints of immediate danger I have none, but increased and increasing nervous affections threaten much remote. I have rushes of feeling nightly, like fainting or death, and induced, I believe, wholly by the dread of them. Even by day they menace me, and an effort of mind is required to dispel them. . . . . So I *must* go, and I *will* go. Now, then, the sooner the better. Some progress is made in the sixth book of Thalaba; my notes are ready for the whole, at least there is only the trouble of arranging and seasoning them. If the bargain were made, it would be time to think of beginning to print, for the preliminaries are usually full of delays, and time with me is of importance. I must have the summer to travel in, and ought to be in Germany by the beginning of June. Treat, therefore, with Longman, or any man, for me.

"The W.'s * are at Clifton: if they saw the probable advantages of a journey to Italy, — of the *possible reach* to Constantinople, the Greek Islands, and Egypt, — in a light as strong as I do, they would, I think, wish to delay the new birth of Lessing: but this is, on your part, a matter of feeling; and when I spoke of your joining us, it was with the conviction that it was a vain wish, but it is a very earnest one. Together we might do so much; and we could leave the women for excursions — now into Hungary, now

* The Messrs. Wedgewood.

into Poland, and see the Turks. Zounds! who knows but, like Sir John Maundeville, we might have gone where the Devil's head is always above ground? Go I must, but it would be a great satisfaction to have a companion. . . . .

"But Lessing's life — and I half wish he had never lived — how long after the first of April (an ominous day) will that confine you? Or if you come here to do it, cannot I raise mortar and carry bricks to the edifice? . . . . For Stuart I *must* make out another quarter. I have huge drains, like the Pontic marshes — a leech hanging on every limb. . . . .

"God bless you.

Yours,
R. SOUTHEY."

To G. C. Bedford, Esq.

"Bristol, Jan. 1. 1800

"We shall be very glad to see you, my dear Grosvenor, if you can come. There is a bed in the house and I am of necessity an idle man, and can show you all things worth seeing, and get you a dose of the beatifying gas, which is a pleasure worth the labour of a longer journey. . . . .

"I have often thought of the Chancery line. . . . . —— did not seem to like it: he is ambitious for me, and perhaps hardly understands how utterly I am without that stimulus. I shall write to him a serious

letter about it. Do not suppose that I feel burthened or uneasy; all I feel is, that were I possessed of the same income in another way, I would never stir a finger to increase it in a way to which self-gratification was not the immediate motive, instead of self-interest. It is enough for all my wants, and just leaves motive enough not to be idle, that I may have to spare for my relatives. This, Grosvenor, I do feel; practically I know my own wants, and can therefore speculate upon them securely.

"Come to Bristol, I pray and beseech you. Winter as it is, I can show you some fine scenes and some pleasant people. You shall see Davy, the young chemist, the young everything, the man least ostentatious, of first talent that I have ever known; and you may experimentalise, if you like, and arrange my Anthology papers, and be as boyish as your heart can wish, ... and I can give you Laver for supper. O rare Laver! . . . .

"Perhaps the closest friendships will be found among men of inferior intellect, for such most completely accord with each other. There is scarcely any man with whom the whole of my being comes in contact; and thus with different people I exist another and yet the same. With ——, for instance, the school-boy feelings revive; I have no other associations in common with him. With some I am the moral and intellectual agent; with others I partake the daily and hourly occurrences of life. You and I, when we would see alike, must put on younger spectacles. Whatever is most important in society, appears to us under different points of view. The man in

Xenophon blundered when he said he had two souls, — my life for it he had twenty! God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Jan. 8. 1800.

"My dear Coleridge,

"I have thought much, and talked much, and advised much about Thalaba, and will endeavour to travel without publishing it: because I am in no mood for running races, and because I like what is done to be done so well, that I am not willing to let it go raggedly into the world. Six books are written, and the two first have undergone their first correction.

"I have the whim of making a Darwinish note at the close of the poem, upon the effects produced in our globe by the destruction of the Dom Daniel. *Imprimis*, the sudden falling in of the sea's roots necessarily made the maelstrom; then the cold of the north is accounted for by the water that rushed into the caverns, putting out a great part of the central fire; the sudden generation of steam shattered the southern and south-east continents into archipelagos of islands; also the boiling spring of Geyser has its source here, — who knows what it did not occasion!

"Thomas Wedgewood has obtained a passport to go to France. I shall attempt to do the same, but am not very anxious for success, as Italy seems cer-

tainly accessible, or at least Trieste is. Is it *quite impossible* that you can go? Surely a life of Lessing may be as well written in Germany as in England, and little time lost. I shall be ready to go as soon as you please: we should just make a carriage-full, and you and I would often make plenty of room by walking. You cannot begin Lessing before May, and you allow yourself ten months for the work. Well, we will be in Germany before June; at the towns, where we make a halt of any time, something may be done, and the actual travelling will not consume more than two months; thus three months only will be lost, and it is worth this price: we can return through France, and, in the interim, Italy offers a society almost as interesting. Duppa will fortify me with all necessary directions for travelling, &c.: and Moses* will be a very mock-bird as to languages; he shall talk German with you and me, Italian with the servants, and English with his mother and aunt; so the young Israelite will become learned without knowing how.

". . . . .

Beddoes advertised, at least six weeks ago, certain cases of consumption, treated in a cow-house; and the press has been standing till now, in expectation of — what think you? only waiting till the patients be cured! This is beginning to print a book sooner than even I should venture. Davy is in the high career of experience, and will soon new-christen (if the word be a chemical one), the calumniated azote.

* This appellation was given to Hartley Coleridge in his infancy and childhood.

They have a new palsied patient, a complete case, certainly recovering by the use of the beatifying gas.

"Perhaps when you are at a pinch for a paragraph *, you may manufacture an anti-ministerial one out of this passage in Bacon's Essays:—

"'You shall see a *bold fellow* many times do Mahomet's miracle. Mahomet made the people believe that he would call a hill to him, and from the top of it offer up his prayers for the observers of his law. The people assembled; Mahomet called the hill to come to him again and again, and when the hill stood still, he was never a bit abashed, but said, If the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill. So these men, when they have promised great matters and failed most shamefully, yet (if they have the perfection of *boldness*), they will but slight it over, make a turne, and no more adoe.'

"I am glad I copied the passage, for, in so doing, I have found how to make this a fine incident in the poem.†

"Maracci's Refutation of the Koran, or rather his preliminaries to it, have afforded me much amusement, and much matter. I am qualified in doctrinals to be a Mufti. The old father groups together all the Mohammedan miracles: some, he says, are nonsense; some he calls lies; some are true, but then the Devil did them; but there is one that tickled his fancy, and he says it must be true of some Christian saint, and so stolen by the Turks. After this he

* For the Morning Post, to which Mr. C. was then a contributor.
† See p. 48.

gives, by way of contrast, a specimen of Christian miracles, and chooses out St. Januarius's blood and the Chapel of Loretto! God bless you.

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

It has already been mentioned, that during my father's residence at Burton, in Hampshire, he had made the acquaintance of Mr. Rickman, at that time residing there. This had soon ripened into an intimacy, and a friendship and correspondence had now commenced, which continued through life; Mr. Rickman being not only, as Mr. Justice Talfourd well names him, "the sturdiest of jovial companions," * and, as Charles Lamb equally well describes him, "fullest of matter with least verbosity," but also a man of vast and varied practical knowledge upon almost all subjects, of the kindest heart, and unwearied in offices of friendship.

Two men more different in most respects than Mr. Rickman and my father could hardly be found, — and yet the points of agreement proved stronger than the points of difference, — both were preeminently *straightforward* men; and they had what is perhaps the closest bond of real friendship, — a high respect for each other's talents, an admiration of each other's character, and a similarity of opinion on almost all the leading questions of the day. Mr. Rickman had, however, been cast in somewhat the rougher mould of the two, and was made of "sterner stuff," and consequently sympathised less with his friend in his "poetic fancies" than on other subjects;

* Final Memorials of Charles Lamb, vol. ii. p. 206.

and, in now writing to urge him to take up a subject in which he had always felt much interested, he commences by a recommendation which was acted upon fully to his satisfaction in after-years. I quote the greater part of this letter, that the reply to it may be the better understood: —

"Poetry has its use and its place, and, like some human superfluities, we should feel awkward without it; but when I have sometimes considered, with some surprise, the facility with which you compose verse, I have always wished to see that facility exerted to more useful purpose. The objects I propose for your investigation are, therefore, the employment and consequent amelioration of womankind, the consequences on the welfare of society, and some illustration of the possibility of these things. You think it too good an alteration to be expected,—and so do I, from virtue; but if the vanity of any leading women could be interested, it might become *fashionable* to promote certain establishments for this purpose, and then it might go down. Besides, the glory of the *proposal* will remain; and if Mary Wolstonecroft had lived, she would have recommended something like this to the world. *Magnis tamen excidit ausis!* Are you aware that female *fraternities* exist (or did exist) in all the great towns of Holland and Flanders, called Beguinages? Employment enough would be found for females: I would take upon me to furnish you with an ample list. Any dry deductions on the head of political economy which might occur, I would also attempt in the service. This is my

favourite study, and nothing could there operate more beneficially than an increased utility of the fair half of our species. You like women better than I do; therefore I think it likely that you may take as much trouble to benefit the sex, as I to benefit the community by their means. For all this, I have been in love these ten years. . . . .

"How do you and Bonaparte agree at present? I never liked the Corsican, and now he has given me new offence by his absurd misnomers, which go to confound all the fixed ideas of consuls, tribunes, and senate. . . . .

"I begin to be almost tired of staying in this obscure place so long; I imagine I was born for better purposes than to vegetate at Christchurch. . . . . I long to see you in prose; I think your conscience would keep you careful, and your imagination make you rapid, and consequently easy and fluent in composition. I suppose you are in the enjoyment of much enlightened society at Bristol. I do not understand your taste for retirement; no man's contemplation can be so spirited as when encouraged by the information and applause of literary friends."* . . .

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Bristol, Jan. 9. 1800.

"The subject of your letter is important. I had considered it cursorily, for my mind has been more occupied by the possible establishment of a different

* J. R. to R. S., Jan. 4. 1800.

state of society, than by plans for improving the present. To my undertaking the work you propose, I wish there were no obstacles, but a very important one exists in the nature of my own powers. The compositions in which I have indulged have encouraged rapidity of feeling, a sudden combination of ideas, but they have been unfavourable to regular deduction and methodical arrangement. Another objection arises from my present plans . . . However, I am impressed by your letter, and should much like to talk with you upon the subject, and map out the country before us. Have you not leisure for a visit to Bristol? . . .

"Poetry does not wholly engross my attention; the history of Spanish and Portuguese literature is a subject on which I design to bestow much labour, and in which much useful matter may be conveyed. But poetry is my province, and at present no unimportant one; it makes its way where weighter books would not penetrate, and becomes a good mental manure.

"I shall be selfishly sorry if you leave Christchurch: the prospect of having you my neighbour, considerably influenced me in taking the Buston House. However, if I recover my health, London must be my place of residence; and you probably will be drawn into that great vortex,—a place which you and I see with widely different eyes. Much as I enjoy society, rather than purchase it by residing in that huge denaturalised city, I would prefer dwelling on Poole Heath. Bristol allows of country enjoyments and magnificent scenery, and an open *sky view*,

for in London you neither see earth, air, or water, undisguised. We have men of talent here also, but they are not gregarious, at least not regularly so as in Norwich and London. I mingle among them, and am in habits of intimacy with Davy, by far the first in intellect: with him you would be much pleased. . . . . Certainly this place has in my memory greatly advanced; ten years ago, Bristol man was synonymous with Bœotian in Greece, and now we are before any of the provincial towns.

"The Corsican has offended me, and even his turning out the Mamelukes will not atone for his rascally constitution. The French are children, with the physical force of men; unworthy, and therefore incapable, of freedom. Once I had hopes; the Jacobins might have done much, but the base of morality was wanting, and where could the corner-stone be laid? They have retarded our progress for a century to come. Literature is suspected and discouraged; Methodism, and the Catholic system of persecution and slavery, gaining ground. Our only hope is from more expeditions, and the duke commander; new disgrace and new taxes may bring the nation to their senses, as bleeding will tame a madman. Still, however, the English are the first people, the only men. Buonaparte has made me Anti-Gallican; and I remember Alfred, and the two Bacons, and Hartley, and Milton, and Shakespeare, with more patriotic pride than ever.

"The Beguines I had looked upon as a religious establishment, and the only good one of its kind. When my brother was a prisoner at Brest, the sick

and wounded were attended by nuns, and these women had made themselves greatly beloved and respected. I think they had been regularly professed, and were not of the lay order. I think I see the whole importance of your speculation. Mary Wollstonecroft was but beginning to reason when she died; her volume is mere feeling, and its only possible effect to awaken a few female minds more excitable than the common run. The one you propose, would go on different grounds and enter into detail: the more my mind dwells upon it, the stronger interest it takes; I could work under your directions, and would work willingly at least, if not well. Come, I pray you, to Bristol; talk over the plan, and map it out, and methodise my rambling intellect. I will submit to any drilling that shall discipline it to good purpose. . . . .

Farewell.

Yours with respect and esteem,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The two following months were passed in lodgings at Bristol, in a very unsettled state as to his future movements. Meantime he was engaged in editing another volume of the Annual Anthology, in pursuing the composition of Thalaba with unabated ardour, and in making various attempts in English hexameters. In this measure he had contemplated a "long and important poem," Mohammed the subject, of the plan of which he thus speaks at this time in one of his published letters to Mr. William Taylor,

to whom he had sent a portion for his criticism: — "From Coleridge I am promised the half, and we divided the book according as the subject suited us, but I expect to have nearly the whole work! His ardour is not lasting, and the only inconvenience that his dereliction can occasion will be that I shall write the poem in fragments, and have to seam them together at the last. The action ends with the capture of Mecca; the mob of his wives are kept out of sight, and only Mary, the Egyptian, introduced. Ali is of course my hero; and if you will recollect the prominent characters of Omar and Abubeker and Hamza, you will see variety enough. Among the Koreish are Amrou and Caled. From Maracci's curious prolegomena to his Refutation of the Koran I have collected many obscure facts for the narrative. Still, however, though the plan is well formed and interesting, I fear it would not give the hexameters a fair chance. A more popular story, and one requiring not the elevation of thought and language which this demands, would probably succeed better; a sort of pastoral epic, which is one of my boy-plans yet unexecuted."*

A fragment only of "Mohammed" was ever written, which may be found in the *latest* edition of the Poems.

My father's health still continuing in a most unsatisfactory state, and change of climate being both the prescription of his physician (Dr. Beddoes) and the remedy in which he had himself the greatest faith,

* Feb. 3. 1800.

he was very desirous of again visiting Lisbon, and had written to his uncle on the subject, whose residence there, and his own desire to collect materials for a History of Portugal, combined to fix his choice. To this, as well as to other subjects of interest, he alludes in the following letter.

To John May, Esq.

"Feb. 18. 1800.

"Your last letter entered into an interesting subject. A young man entering into the world is exposed to hourly danger—and what more important than to discover the best preservative? To have a friend dear enough, and respectable enough, to hold the place of a confessor, would assuredly be the best; and if the office of confessor could always be well filled, I would give up half the Reformation to restore it. In my moments of reverie I have sometimes imagined myself such a character—the obscure instrument in promoting virtue and happiness, but it is obvious that more evil than good results from the power being, like other power, often in improper hands. I have wandered from the subject. It is not likely I shall ever gain the confidence of my brothers to the desired extent: whatever affection they may feel for me, a sort of fear is mixed with it; I am more the object of their esteem than love: there has been no equality between us; we have been rarely domesticated together, and when that has been the case, they have been

accustomed, if they were faulty, to understand my silent disapprobation.* No; —— will never intrust his feelings to me: and as to precepts of warning, indeed I doubt their propriety; I doubt lest, from the strange perverting power of the mind, they should be made to minister to temptation. Indirect admonition, example,—are not these better means? Feelings almost romantically refined were my preservation, and with these I amalgamated afterwards an almost stoical morality. . . . . .

"My health fluctuates, and the necessity of changing climate is sadly and sufficiently obvious, lest, though my disease should prove of no serious danger, the worst habits of hypochondriasm fasten upon me and palsy all intellectual power. I look with anxiety for my uncle's letter; and think so much of Lisbon, that to abandon the thought would be a considerable disappointment. It would highly gratify me to see my uncle, and I have associations with Lisbon that give me a friendship for the place—recollected feelings and hopes, pleasures and anxieties—all now mellowed into remembrances that endear the associated scenes. But that my uncle should approve,—that is perhaps little probable; a few weeks will de-

* In later life, in his intercourse with his children, to whom he was indeed "the father, teacher, playmate," his own beautifully expressed wish was fully realised:—

"And should my youth, as youth is apt I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the holly tree."

cide; and if I do not go to Portugal, I have no choice but Italy, for Madeira is a prison, and the voyage to the West Indies of a terrifying length. This detestable war! if they would make peace upon motives as light as they made war, there would be cause enough, because I want to cross from Dover to Calais: it would save me some sea-sickness, and the wealth and blood of the nation into the bargain.

"I have busied myself in idleness already in the History of Portugal, and the interest which I take in this employment will make me visit the field of Ourique and the banks of Mondeyo and the grave of Inez. The Indian transactions are too much for an episode, and must be separately related. The manners and literature of the country should accompany the chronological order of events. I should disturb the spiders of the Necessidades, and leave no convent library unransacked. Should Italy be my destination, no definite object of research presents itself: the literature of that country is too vast a field to be harvested by one labourer; the history split into fifty channels; the petty broils of petty states infinitely perplexed, infinitely insignificant.

"You have heard me mention Rickman, as one whose society was my great motive for taking the cottage at Burton. He is coming to Bristol to assist me in an undertaking which he proposed and pressed upon me,—an essay upon the state of women in society; and its possible amelioration by means, at first, of institutions similar to the Flemish beguinages. You will feel an interest in this subject. I shall be little more than mason in this business, under the

master architect. Rickman is a man of uncommon talents and knowledge, and political economy has been his favourite study: all calculations and facts requiring this knowledge he will execute. The part intended to impress upon the reader the necessity of alleviating the evil which he sees enforced, will be mine; for Rickman would write too strictly and too closely for the public taste. You probably know the nature of the beguinages; they were female fraternities, where the members were engaged in some useful employments, and bound by no religious obligations. The object is to provide for the numerous class of women who want employment the means of respectable independence, by restoring to them those branches of business, which the men have mischievously usurped, or monopolised, when they ought only to have shared.

"O! what a country might this England become, did its government but wisely direct the strength, and wealth, and activity of the people! Every profession, every trade, is overstocked; there are more adventurers in each, than possibly can find employment; hence poverty and crime. Do not misunderstand me as asserting this to be the sole cause, but it is the most frequent one. A system of colonisation, that should offer an outlet for the superfluous activity of the country, would convert this into a cause of general good; and the blessings of civilisation might be extended over the deserts that, to the disgrace of man, occupy so great a part of the world! Assuredly, poverty and the dread of poverty are the great sources of guilt. . . . . That country cannot be well regulated where marriage is imprudence, where children

are a burthen and a misfortune. A very, very small portion of this evil our plan, if established, will remove; but of great magnitude if separately considered. I am not very sanguine in my expectations of success, but I will do my best, in examining the evil and proposing a remedy. God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

In the course of the following month a letter from his uncle reached him, cordially approving of his wish to try the effect of Lisbon air, and urging him to leave England as soon as possible. His arrangements were quickly completed, and in the following letter to Mr. Coleridge he provides against all possible contingencies: —

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Bristol, April 1. 1800.

"My dear Coleridge,

"The day of our departure is now definitely fixed. We leave Bristol next week, on Thursday. I do not wish to see you before we go; the time is too short, and, moreover, the company of a friend who is soon to be left for a long absence is not desirable. A few words upon business. For the Third Anthology Davy and Danvers will be my delegates: should you be in Bristol, of course the plenipotentiaryship is vested in you. The Chatterton subscription will not fill in less than twelve months: if illness or aught

more cogent detain me beyond that period, I pray you to let that duty devolve upon you; there will be nothing but the task of arrangement. Danvers has a copy of Madoc. The written books of Thalaba will be left with Wynn. A man when he goes abroad should make his will; and this is all my wealth: be my executor, in case I am summoned upon the grand tour of the universe, and do with them, and with whatever you may find of mine, what may be most advantageous for Edith, for my brothers Henry and Edward, and for my mother.

"There is not much danger in a voyage to Lisbon; my illness threatens little, and faith will probably render the proposed remedy efficacious. In Portugal I shall have but little society; with the English there I have no common feeling. Of course I shall enjoy enough leisure for all my employments. My uncle has a good library, and I shall not find retirement irksome.

"Our summer will probably be passed at Cintra, a place which may be deemed a cool paradise in that climate. I do not look forward to any circumstance with so much emotion as to hearing again the brook which runs by my uncle's door. I never beheld a spot that invited to so deep tranquillity. My purposed employments you know. The History will be a great and serious work, and I shall labour at preparing the materials assiduously. The various journies necessary in that pursuit will fill a journal, and grow into a saleable volume. On this I calculate: this is a harvest which may be expected; perhaps also a few mushrooms may spring up.

"If peace will permit me, I shall return along the south of Spain and over the Pyrenees. Edith little likes her expedition; she wants a female companion, but this cannot be had, and she must learn to be contented without one: moreover, there is at Lisbon a lady of her own age, for whom I have a considerable regard, and who will not be sorry to see once more an acquaintance with more brains than a calf. She will be our neighbour. My uncle also is a man for whom it is impossible not to feel affection. I wish we were there; the journey is troublesome, and the voyage shockingly unpleasant, from sickness and the constant feeling of insecurity: however, if we have but mild weather, I shall not be displeased at one more lesson in sea scenery.

. . . . . .

"I should willingly have seen Moses again: when I return he will be a new being, and I shall not find the queer boy whom I have been remembering. God bless him! We are all changing; one wishes sometimes that God had bestowed upon us something of his immutability. Age, infirmities, blunted feelings, blunted intellect, these are but comfortless expectancies! but we shall be boys again in the next world.

"Coleridge, write often to me. As *you* must pay English postage, write upon large paper; as *I* must pay Portuguese by weight, let it be thin. My direction need only be, with the Rev. Herbert Hill, Lisbon; he has taken a house for us. We shall thus govern ourselves, and the plea of illness will guarantee me from cards and company and ball-rooms! No!

no! I do not wear my old cocked hat again! it cannot, certainly, fit me now.

"I take with me for the voyage your poems, the Lyrics, the Lyrical Ballads, and Gebir; and, except a few books designed for presents, these make all my library. I like Gebir more and more: if you ever meet its author, tell him I took it with me on a voyage.

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

R. S."

CHAPTER VII.

LETTERS FROM PORTUGAL.

VOYAGE AND ARRIVAL. — VISITS. — ANECDOTES. — DESCRIPTION OF LISBON. — ROMISH CUSTOMS. — DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY, PROCESSIONS, ETC. — ACCOUNT OF A BULL-FIGHT. — PROPOSED MONUMENT TO FIELDING. — THALABA FINISHED. — LETTERS FROM CINTRA. — LENT PLAYS. — WINE. — LAWS. — MONASTIC SUPERSTITIONS. — BAD ROADS. — ADVICE TO HIS BROTHER HENRY AS TO HIS STUDIES. — ATTACHMENT TO CINTRA. — ACCOUNT OF MAFRA; ITS CHURCH, CONVENT, AND LIBRARY. — PESTILENCE AT CADIZ. — DESCRIPTION OF CINTRA; SCENERY, ETC. — DIRECTIONS FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THALABA. — PROJECTED HISTORY OF PORTUGAL. — EXCURSION TO COSTA. — FISHERMEN. — IMAGE BY THE ROADSIDE. — JOURNEY TO POMBAL. — TORRES VEDRAS, ETC. — ENGLISH POLITICS. — THALABA. — MADOC. — KEHAMA. — PROBABLE INVASION OF PORTUGAL. — ACCOUNT OF JOURNEY TO FARO. — 1800, 1801.

My father had at one time intended to publish a second volume of "Letters from Spain and Portugal;" and, among some fragmentary preparations for these, I find a description of his embarkation and voyage, with which the following series of letters may be fitly prefaced. They are so complete in themselves as to render any remarks on my part needless.

"My dear T.,

"I parted from you at Liskeard with a heavy heart. The thought of seeing you upon the way was a plea-

sure to look on to when we took our departure from Bristol; but having left you, we had taken leave of the last friend before our voyage. Falmouth was not a place to exhilarate us: we were in the room where I met poor Lovel on my former journey; he was the last person with whom I shook hands in England as I was stepping into the boat to embark, and the first news on my return, when, within three hours, I expected to have been welcomed by him, was, that he was in his grave. Few persons bear about with them a more continual feeling of the uncertainty of life, its changes and its chances, than I do. Well! well! I bear with me the faith also, that though we should never meet again in this world, we shall all meet in a better.

"Thanks to the zephyrs, Capt. Yescombe was yet in the harbour. I went on board, chose our berths, passed the custom-house, and then endeavoured to make poor Time as easy as he could be upon the rack of expectation. Six days we watched the weather-cock, and sighed for north-easterns. I walked on the beach, caught soldier-crabs, and loitered to admire the sea-anemones in their ever-varying shapes of beauty; read Gebir, and wrote half a book of Thalaba. There was a sight on the Monday, but the rain kept me within doors: six boys eat pap for a hat, and six men jumped in sacks for a similar prize; in the evening there was an assembly, and the best dancer was a man with a wooden leg. A short account of six days; — if, however, I were to add the bill, you would find it a long one!

"We embarked at four on Thursday afternoon,

As we sailed out of the harbour, the ships there and the shore seemed to swim before my sight like a vision. Light winds and favourable, but we were before the wind, and my poor inside, being obliged to shift every moment with the centre of gravity, was soon in a state of insurrection. There is a pleasure in extracting matter of jest from discomfort and bodily pain; a wholesome habit if it extends no further, but a deadly one if it be encouraged when the heart is sore. I lay in my berth, which always reminded me of a coffin whenever I got into it, and, when any one came near me with inquiries, uttered some quaint phrase or crooked pun in answer, and grunted in unison with the intestinal grumbling which might have answered for me. . . . . We saw the Berlings* on Tuesday night: on Wednesday, Edith and I went on deck at five o'clock; we were off the rock, and the sun seemed to rest upon it for a moment as he rose behind. Mafra was visible; presently we began to distinguish the heights of Cintra and the Penha Convent: the wind blew fresh, and we were near enough the shore to see the silver dust of the breakers, and the sea-birds sporting over them in flocks. A pilot boat came off to us; its great sail seemed to be as unmanageable as an umbrella in a storm; sometimes it was dipped half over in the water, and it flapped all ways, like a woman's petticoat in a high wind. We passed the church and light-house of Nossa Senhora de Guia†, the Convent of St. An-

* Some rocks on the coast of Portugal.

† I find some verses upon this light-house, translated from Vieira, the painter, which were intended to go in a note to this letter:—

tonio with a few trees behind it, and the town of Cascaes. Houses were now scattered in clusters all along the shore; the want of trees in the landscape was scarcely perceived, so delightful was the sight of land, and so cheerful does every thing look under a southern sun.

"Our fellow-traveller was much amused by the numerous windmills which stood in regiments upon all the hills. A large building he supposed to be an inn, and could see the sign and the great gateway for

---

"Now was the time, when in the skies,
Night should have shown her starry eyes;
But those bright orbs above were shrouded,
And heaven was dark and over-clouded.
And now the beacon we espied,
Our blessed Lady of the Guide;
And there, propitious, rose her light,
The never-failing star of night.
The seaman, on his weary way,
Beholds with joy that saving ray,
And steers his vessel, from afar,
In safety o'er the dangerous bar.
A holy impulse of delight
Possess'd us at that well-known sight;
And, in one feeling all allied,
We blest Our Lady of the Guide.
'Star of the sea, all hail!' we sung,
And praised her with one heart and tongue;
And, on the dark and silent sea,
Chaunted Our Lady's Litany."

From a letter to Lieut. Southey, July 11. 1808.

The reader may perhaps be reminded of Sir Walter Scott's beautiful impromptu on a similar subject:—

"PHAROS *loquitur.*

"Far in the bosom of the deep,
O'er these wild shelves my watch I keep,
A ruddy gem of changeful light,
Bound on the dusky brow of Night;
The seaman bids my lustre hail,
And scorns to strike his timorous sail."

Lockhart's Life of Scott, vol. ii. p. 184.

the stage-coaches: the glass enabled him to find out that it was a convent door, with a cross before it. An absence of four years had freshened every object to my own sight, and perhaps there is even a greater delight in recollecting these things than in first beholding them. It is not possible to conceive a more magnificent scene than the entrance of the Tagus, and the gradual appearance of the beautiful city upon its banks.

"The Portuguese say of their capital,

'*Quem naõ ha visto Lisboa*
Naõ ha visto cousa boa.'

'He who has not seen Lisbon, has not seen a fine thing.'

"It is indeed a sight, exceeding all it has ever been my fortune to behold, in beauty and richness and grandeur. Convents and Quintas, gray olive-yards, green orange-groves, and greener vineyards; the shore more populous every moment as we advanced, and finer buildings opening upon us; the river, bright as the blue sky which illuminated it, swarming with boats of every size and shape, with sails of every imaginable variety; innumerable ships riding at anchor far as eye could reach; and the city extending along the shore, and covering the hills to the farthest point of sight."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Lisbon, May-day, 1800.

"Here, then, we are, thank God! alive, and recovering from dreadful sickness. I never suffered so

much at sea, and Edith was worse than I was; we scarcely ate or slept at all: but the passage was very fine and short; five days and a half brought us to our port, with light winds the whole of the way. The way was not, however, without alarm. On Monday morning, between five and six, the captain was awakened with tidings that a cutter was bearing down upon us, with English colours, indeed, but apparently a French vessel; we made a signal, which was not answered; we fired a gun, she did the same, and preparations were made for action. We had another Lisbon packet in company, mounting six guns; our own force was ten; the cutter was a match, and more, for both, but we did not expect to be taken. You may imagine Edith's terror, awakened on a sick bed — disturbed I should have said —with these tidings! The captain advised me to surround her with mattrasses in the cabin, but she would not believe herself in safety there, and I lodged her in the cockpit, and took my station on the quarter-deck with a musket. How I felt I can hardly tell; the hurry of the scene, the sight of grape-shot, bar-shot, and other ingenious implements of this sort, made an undistinguishable mixture of feelings. . . . . The cutter bore down between us; I saw the smoke from her matches, we were so near, and not a man on board had the least idea but that an immediate action was to take place. We hailed her; she answered in broken English, and passed on. 'Tis over! cried somebody. Not yet! said the captain; and we expected she was coming round as about to attack our comrade vessel. She was English, however, manned chiefly from Guernsey,

and this explained her Frenchified language. You will easily imagine that my sensations, at the ending of the business, were very definable, — one honest simple joy that I was in a whole skin! I laid the musket in the chest with considerably more pleasure than I took it out. I am glad this took place; it has shown me what it is to prepare for action.

"Four years' absence from Lisbon have given everything the varnish of novelty, and this, with the revival of old associations, makes me pleased with everything. Poor Manuel, too, is as happy as man can be to see me once more; here he stands at breakfast, and talks of his meeting me at Villa Franca, and what we saw at this place and at that, and hopes that whenever I go into the country he may go with me. It even amused me to renew my acquaintance with the fleas, who opened the campaign immediately on the arrival of a foreigner. We landed yesterday about ten in the morning, and took possession of our house the same night. Our house is very small, and thoroughly Portuguese; little rooms all doors and windows,—odd, but well calculated for coolness: from one window we have a most magnificent view over the river, — Almada hill, and the opposite shore of Alentejo, bounded by hills about the half mountain height of Malvern. . . . . .

. . . . . .

"To-day is a busy day; we are arranging away our things, and seeing visitors: these visits must all be returned; there ends the ceremony, and then I may choose retirement. I hurry over my letters, for the sake of feeling at leisure to begin my employments.

The voyage depriving me of all rest, and leaving me too giddy to sleep well, will, with the help of the fleas, break me in well for early rising. The work before me is almost of terrifying labour; folio after folio to be gutted, for the immense mass of collateral knowledge which is indispensable: but I have leisure and inclination.

"Edith, who has been looking half her time out of the window, has just seen 'really a decent-looking woman;' this will show you what cattle the passers-by must be. She has found out that there are no middle-aged women here, and it is true; like their climate, it is only summer and winter. Their heavy cloaks of thick woollen, like horsemen's coats in England, amuse her in this weather, as much as her clear muslin would amuse them in an English winter. . . . . .

"Thalaba will soon be finished. Rickman is my plenipotentiary with the booksellers for this. Pray send me your Plays. . . . . Thalaba finished, all my poetry, instead of being wasted in rivulets and ditches, shall flow into the great Madoc Mississippi river. I have with me your volume, Lyrical Ballads, Burns, and Gebir. Read Gebir again: he grows upon me.

"My uncle's library is admirably stocked with foreign books. . . . . My plan is this: immediately to go through the chronicles in order, and then make a skeleton of the narrative; the timbers put together, the house may be furnished at leisure. It will be a great work, and worthy of all labour.

"I am interrupted momentarily by visitors, like fleas, infesting a new-comer! Edith's spirits are

mending: a handful of roses has made her forgive the stink of Lisbon; and the green peas, the oranges, &c., are reconciling her to a country for which nature has done so much. We are transported into your midsummer, your most luxuriant midsummer!—Plague upon that heart-stop, that has reminded me that this is a voyage of prescription as well as of pleasure. But I will get well; and you must join us, and return with us over the Pyrenees, and some of my dreams must be fulfilled!

"God bless you! Write to me, and some long letters; and send me your Christabell and your Three Graces, and finish them on purpose to send them. Edith's love. I reach a long arm, and shake hands with you across the seas.

Yours,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Bellona.

"Lisbon, May 8. 1800

. . . . .

"The English, when strangers here, are so suspicious of the natives as to be very rash in misinterpreting them. A young man, whom I knew, fired at the watch one night when they accosted him: the ball passed through the watchman's hat; he was seized and confined, and it required interest and money to excuse him for what was inexcusable. My uncle, walking one night with a midshipman, was stopt by persons bearing a young man who had been run through the body by a lieutenant; they

had stopt him, seeing his companion's uniform, but, knowing my uncle, suffered him to pass after telling the circumstances. The lieutenant was drunk; the young man was a gentleman, who, seeing him staggering about the streets, took him by the arm to lead him home; the Englishman did not understand what he said, and ran him through.

"As yet we have not done receiving all our visits of ceremony. We are going, the first night we are at liberty, to the Portuguese play. The court have shown a strange caprice about the Opera: they permitted them to have a few female singers, and the proprietors of the Opera sent to Italy for more and better ones. They came. No! they would not license any more; the present women might act, but not the new comers. You must not expect me to give you any reason for this inconsistency; 'tis the sheer whim of authority; but an odd reason was assigned for permitting two, who still act — one because she is very religious, the other because she is Portuguese and of a certain age.

"On Sunday a princess was christened. In the evening the guns fired a signal for all persons to illuminate. It was a pleasing sight from our window: the town all starred, and the moving lights of the shipping. . . . . But the river, seen by moonlight from hence, is a far finer spectacle than art can make. It lies like a plain of light under the heaven, the trees and houses now forming a dark and distinct foreground, and now undistinguishable in shade as the moon moves on her way; — Almada stretching its black isthmus into the waters, that shine like mid-

night snow. . . . . A magnificent equipage passed our window on Monday: it was a nobleman either going to be married, or to court. The carriage was drawn by four horses, each covered with a white netting, and crested with white plumes; they were very restive, indeed but half broke in. I had seen them breaking in before, and on these occasions they always fill the carriage with servants to make it heavy, so that their necks also run a chance of being broken in. It was like the pomp of romance. They bury in covered buildings that adjoin the church; the graves are built in divisions, like tanners' pits: you may, perhaps, remember such at Bristol, at St. Paul's, which I saw building. Quicklime is thrown in with every body, which, of course, is soon consumed: still the bones accumulate, and occasionally these places are cleared out. . . . .

"They have a singular mode of fishing at Costa, a sort of wigwam village on the sands south of the bar. The gang of fishermen to each net is about fifty, all paid and fed by the captain regularly, — not according to their success. Half hold one end of a rope, the other is carried off in the boat; the rope is about half a mile in length, the net in the middle. A high surf breaks on the shore; the men then thrust off the boat, themselves breast-deep, and stooping under every wave that meets them; the others row round to shore, and then they all haul in. This place is about nine miles only from Lisbon, and yet criminals run away there and are safe. Sometimes a magistrate goes down, but they always know that he is coming, and away to the woods for

the day. It is common to go there from town, and dine upon the sands. The people are civil and inoffensive; indeed, generally so over Portugal, except among the boatmen, who have enough intercourse with foreigners to catch all their vices.

"Lord Somerville went by the last packet. I did not see him; he would have called one evening, but my uncle, knowing him pressed for time, begged him to waive the ceremony. I have been very industrious, and continue so — rise early, and never waste a minute. If I am at home without visitors, I go from book to book; and change is more relief than idleness. The American minister called on me after supper on Tuesday; this was somewhat familiar, and I apprehend, was meant as civility. God bless you.

R. S."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Bellona.

"Lisbon, May 23. 1800.

"Lisbon has twice been clean since the creation. Noah's flood washed it once, and the fire after the earthquake purified it. When it will be clean again, will be difficult to say; probably not till the general conflagration. A house, at which I called yesterday, actually has a drain running round one of the sides, which empties all the filth before the entrance. . . . . Government will neither cleanse the city themselves, nor suffer any one else to do it. An English merchant applied lately for permission to clean the street in which he lived, and it was refused. This is one of the curious absurdities of the P. go-

vernment. An English invalid, who was terribly shaken in his carriage by the ragged pavement in his street, applied to the proper officers to allow him to have it mended: they would not do it. He was a man of fortune.

"The filthiest offices in the place are performed by negroes. . . . . These poor people were brought as slaves into Portugal, till Pombal prohibited all future importation, still leaving those already in the country slaves, that property might not be invaded. Once since, a petition was presented that the country wanted negroes, and a few were imported in consequence. When they have grown old in service and slavery, the trick of Portuguese generosity is to give them their liberty; that is as if, in England, a man, when his horse was grown old, should turn him adrift, instead of giving the old animal the run of his park. Of course black beggars are numerous. Grey-headed, and with grey beards, they look strangely; and some, that have the leprosy, are the most hideous objects imaginable. The old women wear nothing on their heads, and, what with their woolly hair and their broad features, look sometimes so fearfully ugly that I do not wonder at the frequency of negresses in romance. A priest in this country *sold his own daughter* by a negress. The Portuguese despise the negroes, and by way of insult sneeze at them as they pass: this is their strongest mark of contempt. Our phrase, 'a fig for him,' is explained by an amulet in use here against witchcraft, called a *figa;* the mules and asses wear it. It is the figure of a hand closed, the thumb cocked out between the fore and

middle fingers. I first saw it mentioned in a curious poem by Vieira, the famous, and indeed only good, Portuguese painter. He had one given him when a child to save him from an evil eye, for he was in more danger on account of his being handsome and quick; as we say, a child is too clever to live. The 'gift of the gab,' must also be of Portuguese extraction: *gaban* is to praise, to coax.

"No doubt this is a regular government; it is an old monarchy, and has an established church. . . . A lawyer in England wrote a book to prove that our monarchy was absolute also; and Hughes, the clergyman at Clifton, whom you may have seen at my aunt's, lamented in a pamphlet that that *awful tribunal, the Inquisition, had relaxed its vigilance:* but you may not forge and murder with impunity. An acquaintance of mine (Tennant, well known for some famous chemical experiments on the diamond) met an Irishman in Switzerland, who had been at Rome. He said it was the most *laineant* government in the world: you might kill a man in the streets, and nobody would take the *laist* notice of it. This also is a *laineant* government: a man stabs his antagonist, wipes the knife in his cloak, and walks quietly away. It is a point of honour in the spectators to give no information. If one servant robs his master, it is a point of honour in his fellow-servants never to inform of him. Both these points of honour are inviolable from prudence, for a stab would be the consequence. One method of revenge used in the provinces is ingeniously wicked: they beat a man with sand-bags. These do not inflict so much immediate pain as a cane would do, but they so

bruise all the fine vessels, that, unless the poor wretch be immediately scarified, a lingering death is the consequence. My uncle has known instances at Porto. For all useful purposes of society, this is a complete anarchy; in the police every individual is interested; security is the object of political institutions, and here every man is at the mercy of every ruffian he meets. These things make no noise here. A man was murdered this week within thirty yards of our house, and we only heard it ten days afterwards by mere accident; yet all goes on smoothly as the Tagus flows over the dead bodies that are thrown into it. . . . . In England you will imagine that this insecurity must occasion perpetual disquiet. Not so. As I do not quarrel, and nobody has any interest in sending me to the next world, there is no danger. We are, indeed, safer than in England, because there is not so much ingenuity exerted in villany. Instruments for picking pockets and breaking open houses have not yet been introduced. The country is not civilised enough to produce coiners. A man may as easily escape being assassinated here, as he can fighting a duel in England.

"On Sunday, some boys, dressed like blue-coat boys, went under our window, with baskets, begging provisions or money. A man has set up this charity school on speculation, and without funds, trusting to chance alms. The 'Emperor of the Holy Ghost' also passed us in person: his flags are new, and his retinue magnificent in their new dresses of white and scarlet; his musicians were all negroes: before him went a grave and comely personage, carrying a gilt

w nd of about ten feet high. The Emperor is about six years old, exceedingly thin, dressed like a man in full dress, silk stockings, large buckles, a sword, and an enormous cocked hat, bigger than yours, edged with white fringe. On either side marched a gentleman usher, from time to time adjusting his hat, as its heavy corners preponderated. The attendants carried silver salvers, on which they had collected much copper money: few poor people passed who did not give something.

"Lately a negro went along our street with a Christ in a glass case, which he showed to every one whom he met. They usually kissed the glass and gave him money. Pombal, in his time, prohibited such follies. These images have all been blessed by the Pope, and are therefore thus respected. I was in a shop the other day waiting for change, when a beggar-woman came in. As I did not give her anything, she turned to an image of Our Lady, prayed to it and kissed it, and then turned round to beg again.

"Religion is kept alive by these images, &c., like a fire perpetually supplied with fuel. They have a saint for every thing. . . . . One saint preserves from lightning, another from fire, a third clears the clouds, and so on — a salve for every sore. It is a fine religion for an enthusiast — for one who can let his feelings remain awake, and opiate his reason. Never was goddess so calculated to win upon the human heart as the Virgin Mary; and devotees, Moravians as well as Catholics, not unfrequently mingle the feelings of earthly and spiritual love, as

strangely as our Bible has mixed the language in Solomon's Song. We have an instance in Crashaw the poet's hymn to St. Theresa.

"One of the new convent towers is miserably disfigured by a projecting screen of wood. The man who rings the bell stands close by it, and the ugly thing is put there, lest he should see the nuns walking in the garden, or lest they should see him, for a nun has nothing but love to think of, and a powder magazine must be guarded warily. A million sterling has been expended upon this convent; it is magnificent within, wholly of marble, and the colour well disposed. A million sterling! and the great square is unfinished, and the city without flagstones, without lamps, without drains!

"I meet the galley-slaves sometimes, and have looked at them with a physiognomic eye to see if they differed from the rest of the people. It appeared to me that they had been found out, the others had not. The Portuguese face, when fine, is very fine, and it rarely wants the expression of intellect.

"The gardens have usually vine-covered walks, stone pillars supporting the trellis poles. Some you see in the old-fashioned style—box cut into patterns like the zig-zag twirling of a Turkey carpet pattern. The Convent of the Necessidades has a very large and fine garden, open to men but not to women. This is laid out in shady walks, like the spokes of wheels, that centre into fountains; the space between the walks occupied with oranges, lemons, and other fruit trees. Everywhere innumerable lizards are to be seen sporting in the sun, grey or green, from two

inches to twenty in length, nimble, harmless, beautiful animals. . . . . God bless you.

R. S."

To Mrs. Southey, Senr.

"Lisbon, May 23. 1800.

"My dear Mother,

"Our trunk arrived by the last packet: a joyful arrival, for I was beginning to be as bare as a plucked ostrich. . . . . We go on comfortably; as clean as an English house upstairs, as dirty as a Portuguese one below. Edith, like Mr. Pitt, is convinced of the impossibility of reform. Manuel will clean the kitchen, indeed, but immediately he will scrape the fish-scales all over it. These people have no foresight. We, however, are very well off; and, for a Portuguese, our Maria Rosa is extraordinarily tidy.

"——— is here, the Wine Street man, and he goes to market himself; and I am going to cultivate his acquaintance, in order to find out what good things may have escaped my appetite here. Nothing like a Bristol pointer at an eatable thing. . . . . My uncle has enough to do with burying and christening among the soldiers, though the priests poach among his flock sadly. We profit somewhat by the war, getting most excellent pieces of the sirloin from the rations. The summer we pass at Cintra, whither, however, we shall not go till July, for in June we have to see the procession of the 'Body of God,' of

St. Anthony, and the royal family with the knight of the new convent; and we must also wait to see a bull-fight, which, being a cool summer amusement, only takes place in the hottest weather.

"I read nothing but Spanish and Portuguese. Edith knows enough of the common words to get all needful things done about the house. We have had an infinite number of visitors, and our debt is not yet paid off. . . . . .

"Edith has seen the aqueduct. Even after having seen it, I was astonished at its magnitude. Shakespeare's 'lessen'd to a crow' seemed hardly hyperbolical, when I looked down from the middle arch upon the brook of Alcantara: the women washing there would have escaped my sight if I had not seen them moving as they walked. It is a work worthy of Rome in the days of her power and magnificence. The Portuguese delight in water; the most luscious and cloying sweetmeats first — for instance, preserved yolk of egg — and then a glass of water, and this is excellent which comes by the aqueduct. The view from the top is wonderfully fine: a stony shallow brook below, a few women washing in it, bare-kneed, the sides sprinkled with linen drying in the sun; orange, and vine, and olive-yards along the line of fertility that runs below the hills, and houses scattered in the little valley, and bare dark hills and windmills, and houses far beyond and distant mountains. She has also seen the new convent. The inside of the church is of marble, and the colour very well disposed. You will remember that a marble room, chilling as it would be in England, is

here only cool and comfortable. It is dedicated to the Heart of Jesus, which is the subject of more than one picture in the church. In one, the queen (for she built it) is represented adoring the heart. You would not like the Roman Catholic religion quite so well if you saw it here in all its naked nonsense — could you but see the mummery, and smell the friars! There is no dying in peace for these fellows; they kill more than even the country apothecaries. When a man is given over, in they come, set up singing, which they never cease till the poor wretch is dead; build an altar in the room, light their candles, and administer extreme unction, which has much the same effect as if in England you measured a sick man for his coffin and dressed him in his shroud. They watch after the dying like Bristol undertakers. My uncle is always obliged to mount guard, and yet last week they smuggled off an officer; got at him when his senses were gone, stuck a candle in his hand, and sung 'O be joyful' for a convert.

"We have had three illuminations for the new Pope. . . . . We had another illumination for the christening of a princess. These things are not, as in England, at the will of the mob. An illumination is proclaimed; at a proper hour the guns fire to say 'now light your candles;' at ten they fire again to give notice you may put them out: and if you do not illuminate, you are fined about thirty shillings, — but no riots, no mobbing, no breaking windows. . . . .

"The literature of this place takes up much of my

time. I am never idle, and, I believe, must set at Thalaba in good earnest to get it out of my way.

"God bless you.

Your affectionate son,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Bellona.

"Lisbon, May 30. 1800.

The country immediately adjoining Buenos Ayres, the hill on which we live, is very unpleasant; bare, burnt hills, bearing nothing but windmills. The Valley of Alcantara, over which the great aqueduct passes, is indeed very striking; it winds among these hills, and perhaps owes much of its beauty to the contrast, like the villages in the South Downs, and that beautiful valley on the left of the road from Salisbury to Deptford. In rich countries they would not be noticed, but here they are like water in the deserts. The whole road to Cintra is thus ugly and uninteresting. The road paved all the way — a very Devil's bowling-alley — you can imagine no scenery more wearying; but eastward of Lisbon it is totally different; there all is rich and beautiful — exquisitely beautiful, now that the green corn and the vineyards give it all the fresh verdure of an English landscape. Yesterday evening I took a long ride there with my uncle about the Valley of Chellas, the gardens of which delightful spot chiefly supply Lisbon. The place is intersected by a thousand bye-lanes, unenterable by carriage, and as intricate as one of the last propositions in Euclid, all angles and

curves. In this scenery there is scarcely an English feature. Orange trees in the gardens, and vine-covered trellis-walks; olive trees growing in the corn-fields, and now in full blossom: the blossom is somewhat like the old-man's-beard of our hedges, not so striking at a distance as when looked into, but it gives a greyness to the tree, a sober blossom, in character with the dusty foliage: fig trees, their broad leaves so green and rich, and a few broad-headed pine trees here and there, and cherries, apricots, &c., in the gardens, varying the verdure. In the gardens is usually a water-wheel, and the garden is veined with little aqueducts; these wheels creak eternally, and such is the force of association that the Portuguese reckon this creaking among the delights of the country: they think of water, and the garden revived by it.

"The country looks covered with wood; not, indeed, of forest size, but large enough for beauty, and all useful. The fences are either walls, — and the walls are soon covered with luxuriant vegetation in this country, — or aloe-guarded banks; and the aloe is magnificent: the stem of the blossom looks almost like a piece of timber: and the fennel grows finely as a weed; you know its handsome leaf, fine as vegetable threads, or like hair fine and curled, its blossom growing tall, a fine yellow flower, distinguishable at a considerable distance from its size: and the acanthus, the plant that gave a man of genius the idea of the Corinthian capital, which he in consequence invented; — blend these with wild roses and woodbines, more profusely beautiful than I ever saw them elsewhere, and you have the idea of these bank-

fences. Our way was up and down steep hills, whence we looked over the valleys, its scattered houses, and here and there a convent, always a beautiful object, and sometimes the river, and its far shore like a low cloud. It was dusk before we returned, and the fire-flies were awake, flashing about the banks, and then putting out their candles, and again in light, like fairy fireworks. My uncle, when first in this country, had lost himself in a lane at Cintra; it was evening; he had heard nothing of these fire-flies, and some hundreds rose at once before him: he says he thought there was a volcano beginning under his feet.

"The warm weather is come; we shut our windows to exclude the heated air, and our shutters to darken the room: if half the money expended upon the souls in purgatory were employed in watering the street, we should be relieved from the torment of burning. Yet is the heat more endurable than the intense light; this is insufferably painful: the houses are white, the stones in the street white, the very dust bleached, and all reflect back upon us the scorching sun: the light is like the quivering of a furnace fire; it dazzles and makes the eyes ache, and blindness is very common. At evening the sea breeze rises, a sudden change! tremendous for an invalid, but it purifies the town, and then, owl-like, we come out of our nests. At Cintra we shall be cool; we wait only for the processions of the Body of God, and St. Anthony, the 12th and 13th of June, and the Heart of Jesus on the 28th, and the first bull-fight, which will be about that time.

"The butchers annually pay a certain sum to

government, like tax or turnpike-men in England Veal is prohibited; there are, however, smugglers who carry on a contraband trade in veal, and better mutton than is to be procured in the legal way: one of these was taken up near our door a few days since a public calamity, I assure you. The Portuguese servants do not like mutton, and they mutinied in an English family the other day on this account. A tax of one real per pound on all meat sold in Lisbon raises the fund for the aqueduct; a light tax (about the fifth of a halfpenny) for so great a benefit. The water is indeed purchased from the Gallegos, who are water-carriers by trade, but you may send to the fountains if you please; and the Great Aqueduct is known by a name expressive of this,—they call it the free waters. The number of Gallegos employed here is disgraceful both to Spain and Portugal: to their own country, that these industrious people cannot find employment at home; to this, that the Portuguese are lazy enough to let foreigners do their work, who annually drain Lisbon of its specie.

"The mules and goats have a most ugly cup-shaped bell, from six to twelve inches long, hanging from their neck, with a clapper as rude as the rude cup in which it clinks. Manuel is at war with my uncle's mule, and, like worse people than himself, adopts the system of coercion, when conciliation has been advised, and the effects of force experienced. 'You should coax the mule,' said my uncle, 'and never go near her without carrying her something in your hand.' 'No, senhor,' said Mambrino, 'that is the way with *horned cattle*, I know, but not with beasts like mules and

horses; nothing but beating will do.' One day there was a hallaballoo (I never saw that word in a dictionary, so pardon the spelling if it be wrong) in the stables, which alarmed my uncle; out he went, and there was Manuel, discomfited by the mule, and crawled up under the manger in bodily fear.

"Friday, June 6th.

"Your letter has just reached me; a welcome visitant. Here a letter is of ten-fold more value than in England: our friends are, perhaps, like our daily comforts,—their value hardly understood till we are deprived of them. I go on comfortably. The weather makes me lazy, and yet I have read enormously, and digested much. Laziness is the influenza of the country. The stone-cutter will lay his head upon the stone at which he has worked, and sleep, though it be hot enough to broil a beaf-steak. The very dogs are lazy: it was but yesterday I saw a great son of a bitch (literally) let a mule step upon him, from sheer laziness; and then he rose, howling, and *walked* away. The fellows lie sleeping every where in the streets; they seem to possess the power of sleeping when they will. Everlasting noise is another characteristic of Lisbon. Their noonday fireworks, their cannonading on every fool's pretext, their bells to every goat in a flock and every mule in a drove, prove this; above all, their everlasting bell-ding-donging,—for bell-ringing would convey the English idea of music, and here it is only noise. A merchant, not far from my uncle's, has a private chapel, from whence his bells annoy the whole neighbourhood. The English Hotel, till lately, was near

him, and the invalids were disturbed, and of course injured, by the noise: they sent to state this, and request that he would have the goodness to dispense with the bell-ringing; he returned for answer, that the Prince had given him leave to have a private chapel, and his bells should ring in spite of any body! I would have this fellow hung up by the heels, as a clapper to Great Tom of Lincoln, and punish him in kind.

"We often heard a noise below which puzzled us; it was like damping linen, but so often, that all the linen in Lisbon could not have supplied the sound. At last, when Maria was cleaning the adjoining room, we heard it; she was laying the dust, and in the same way as she damps the clothes in ironing,—by taking a great mouthful of water and then spirting it out: this is the Portuguese way, and the mouth makes a very good watering-pot.

"I have heard a good anecdote to illustrate the personal insecurity in this kingdom. Did you ever see old H——? He was a Porto merchant, and had a quarrel with a Portuguese, in consequence of which he and his antagonist always went out with guns, each watching for the first shot; but the Portuguese used to attack his house at night and fire through the windows at him, till Mrs. H——, who did not like this chance-shooting, prevailed on her husband to quit the kingdom. The gallows here has a stationary ladder; and God knows, if the hangman did all that was necessary, he would have a hard place.

"My uncle has purchased charts of all the coasts and ports of Spain and its islands, with the intention of giving them to you. Should you ever get on this

station, they will be eminently useful. Lord St. Vincent has a copy, but the copies are so rare and so expensive that there can be very few in the navy.

"God bless you! Edith's love.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Lieut. Southey, H.M.S. Bellona.

"Sunday, June 15. 1800, Lisbon.

"My dear Tom,

"On Tuesday Rundell goes. To-morrow I have an engagement for the day, and lack of paper has till now prevented me from preparation; so now for a galloping letter!

"Thursday last we saw the long-looked-for Procession of the Body of God. The Pix is carried in all other processions empty; in this only it has the wafer,—this is the only *Real Presence*. The Pix is a silver vessel; and our vulgarism, 'please the pigs,' which has sometimes puzzled me, is only a corruption, and that an easy one, of 'please the Pix,'—the holiest church utensil. So much for the object of this raree-show. On the night preceding, the streets through which it is to pass are cleaned: the only miracle I ever knew the wafer perform is that of cleaning the streets of Lisbon: they are strewn with sand, and the houses hung with crimson damask, from top to bottom. When the morning arrived, the streets were lined with soldiers; they marched on, filing to the right and left: their new uniforms are put on this day, and their appearance was very respectable: this alone was

a fine sight. We were in a house in one of the new streets, where the houses are high and handsome, and perfectly regular, and the street longer than Redcliffe Street, every window and balcony crowded, and the Portuguese all in full-dress; and of the finery of Portuguese full-dress you can have but very inadequate ideas: not a jewel in Lisbon but was displayed,—the rainbow would have been ashamed to be seen. The banners of the city and its various corporate trades led the way. I never saw banners so clumsily carried; they were stuck out with bars,—not suffered to play freely and wave with the wind, and roll out their beauties in light and shade: sticks were stuck at right angles in the poles to carry them by; nothing could be more awkward or more laborious for the bearers, some of whom were walking backward like lobsters, and others crab-sidling along; then came a champion in armour, carrying a flag; God knows, his armour was heavy enough; and as both his arms were employed upon the flag, his horse was led. Here, also, I saw St. George, but not St. George of England! This was a Portuguese wooden St. George, his legs stiff and striding like a boot-jack, a man walking on each side to hold him on by the feet; his house, when he is at home, is the Castle, from whence he goes to the Duke of Cadaval's, where they dress his hat up with all their magnificent jewels for the procession, which he calls and returns on his way back. When the late king was dying, he had all the saints in Lisbon sent for, and this St. George was put to bed to him. The consultation produced no good effect.

"Scarcely any part of the procession was more beautiful than a number of very fine led horses, their saddles covered with rich escutcheons. All the brotherhoods then walked,—an immense train of men in red or grey cloaks; and *all* the friars. Zounds, what a regiment! many of them fine young men, some few 'more fat than friars became,' and others again as venerable figures as a painter could wish: among the bearded monks were many, so old, so meagre, so hermit-like in look, of such a bread-and-water diet appearance, that there needed no other evidence to prove they were indeed penitents, as austere as conscientious folly could devise. The knights of the different orders walked in their superb dresses—the whole patriarchal church in such robes! and after the Pix came the Prince himself, a group of nobles round him closing the whole. I never saw aught finer than this: the crowd closing behind, the whole street, as far as the eye could reach, above and below, thronged, flooded, with people—and the blaze of their dresses! and the music! I pitied the friars—it was hot, though temperate for the season, yet the sun was painful, and on their shaven heads; they were holding up their singing-books, or their hands, or their handkerchiefs, or their cowls, to shade them. I have heard that it has been death to some of them in a hot season. Two years ago, at this very procession, a stranger received a stroke of the sun, and fell down apparently dead. The Irish friars got hold of him and carried him off to be buried. The coffins here are like a trunk, and the lid is left open during the funeral service; before it was over, the man moved—

what then did the Paddies? Oh to be sure, and they could not bury him then! but they locked him in the church instead of calling assistance, and the next day the man was dead enough, and they finished the job!

"Had this been well managed, it would have been one of the finest conceivable sights; but it was a long procession broken into a number of little pieces, so irregularly they moved. On the Prince, and the group about the Body of God — I like to translate it, that you may see the nakedness of the nonsensical blasphemy — they showered rose-leaves from the windows. The following day St. Anthony had a procession, and the trappings of the houses were ordered to remain for him: this was like the Lent processions, a perfect puppet-show — the huge idols of the people carried upon men's shoulders; there were two negro saints, carried by negroes — I smiled to think what black angels they must make. We have got another raree-show to see in honour of the Heart of Jesus; this will be on Friday next; and then we think of Cintra.

"This has been a busy time for the Catholics. Saturday, the 7th of this month, as the Eve of Trinity Sunday, was a festival at the Emperor's* head quarters; his mountebank stage was illuminated, and pitch barrels blazing along the street, their flames flashing finely upon the broad flags that floated across the way. It was somewhat terrible; they were bonfires of superstition, and I could not help thinking how much better the spectators would have been pleased with the sight had there been a Jew, or a

* The Emperor of the Holy Ghost, as he is called; see ante, p. 71.

heretic like me, in every barrel. The scene was thronged with spectators, and to my great surprise I saw women walking in safety; nothing like personal insult was attempted: the boys had their bonfires and fireworks, but they seemed to have no idea that mischief was amusement. The succeeding day, Trinity Sunday, was the termination of the Emperor's reign. His train was increased by a band of soldiers; he was crowned, and dined in public. The Emperor for the ensuing year was elected; and thus ends the mummery, till Lent, and feasting, and folly come round again. At Cascaes the Emperor is a man, and the farce more formal. There was a brother of John V., who delighted in blackguard mischief; he went to the Emperor, then on the throne, with the intention of kicking him down, or some such practical jest. The Emperor knew him, sate like an old senator when the Gauls approached, and held out his hand for the Prince to kiss; it effectually disconcerted him, and he growled out as he retired, 'the rascal plays his part better than I expected.'

"In the course of a conversation, introduced by these processions, I said to a lady, who remembers the auto-da-fes, 'What a dreadful day it must have been for the English when one of these infernal executions took place!' 'No,' she said, 'not at all; it was like the processions, expected as a fine sight, and the English, whose houses overlooked the streets through which they passed, kept open house as now, and made entertainments!!' They did not, indeed, see the execution,—that was at midnight; but they should have shut up their houses, and, for the honour

of their own country, have expressed all silent abhorrence. Did such an event take place now, I should shake the dust from my feet, and curse the city, and leave it for ever! What is it that has prevented these Catholic bonfires? I do not understand. The constitution and the people never were more bigoted; and the dislike of Pombal would, after his disgrace, have only been a motive for reviving them. Is it that the priests themselves and the nobles have grown irreligious? Perhaps the books of Voltaire may have saved many a poor Jew from the flames.

"Portugal is certainly improving, but very, very, very slowly. The factories have been long declining in opulence; and the Portuguese, who had some years since no merchants of note, have now the most eminent and wealthy in the place. They are beginning to take the profits themselves, which they had suffered us to reap: this is well, and as it should be; but they have found out that Cintra is a fine place, and are buying up the houses there as they are vacant, so that they will one day dispossess the English, and this I do not like. Cintra is too good a place for the Portuguese. It is only fit for us Goths—for Germans or English.

"Your Thalaba is on the stocks. You will have it some six months before it can possibly be printed, and this is worth while. I this morning finished the Tenth Book—only two more; and at the end of a journey Hope always quickens my speed. Farewell. I am hurried, and you must and may excuse (as Rundell is postman extraordinary) a sheet not quite filled. God bless you! Edith's love.

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Bellona.

"June 22. 1800.

"My dear Tom,

"We are just returned from a bull-feast, and I write to you while the feelings occasioned by this spectacle are fresh. I had never before seen one. The buffoonery of teazing bullocks at Madrid was rather foolish than cruel, and its extreme folly excited laughter, as much at the spectators as the thing itself. This is widely different. The handbill was pompous: — 'Antonio de Cordeiro, who had so distinguished himself last year, was again to perform. The entertainment would deserve the approbation of a generous public. Ten bulls were to be killed, four to be tormented; they were picked bulls, of the Marquis de ——'s breed (I forget his name), and chosen out for their courage and ferocity.' Yesterday the bull-fighters paraded the streets, as you may have seen rope-dancers and the 'equestrian troop' at Bristol fair; they were strangely disfigured with masques; one fellow had a paunch and a Punch-hump-back, and all were dressed in true tawdry style. Hot weather is always the season, and Sunday always the day, the amusement being cool and devout! At half after four it began: the hero was on horseback, and half a dozen men on foot to assist him; about ten more sat with pitchforks to defend themselves, ready when wanted: the bulls were all in the area till the amusement opened; they were not large, and not the same breed as in England; they

had more the face of the cow than the short sulky look of gentlemen,—quiet, harmless animals, whom a child might safely have played with, and a woman would have been ashamed to fear. So much for their *ferocity!* Courage, indeed, they possessed; they attacked only in self-defence, and you would, like me, have been angry to see a fellow with a spear, provoking a bull whose horns were tipt with large balls, the brave beast, all bleeding with wounds, still facing him with reluctant resistance: once I saw crackers stuck into his neck to irritate him, and heard them burst in his wounds; you will not wonder that I gave the Portuguese a hearty and honest English curse. It is not an affair of courage; the horse is trained, the bull's horns muffled, and half a dozen fellows, each ready to assist the other, and each with a cloak, on which the poor animal wastes his anger: they have the rails to leap over, also, and they know that when they drop the cloak he aims always at that; there is, therefore, little danger of a bruise, and none of anything else. The amusement is, therefore, as cowardly as cruel. I saw nine killed; the first wound sickened Edith, and my own eyes were not always fixed upon the area. My curiosity was not, perhaps, strictly excusable, but the pain which I endured was assuredly penalty enough. The fiercest of the whole was one of the four who were only tormented; two fellows on asses attacked him with goads, and he knocked them over and over with much spirit; two more came on, standing each in the middle of a painted horse, ridiculously enough—and I fancy those fellows will remember him for the next fortnight whenever they

turn in bed—and their sham horses were broken to pieces. Three dogs were loosed at another bull, and effectually sickened. I hate bull-dogs; they are a surly, vicious breed, ever ready to attack, mischievous and malicious enough to deserve parliamentary praise from Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Canning. A large theatre was completely full; men, women, and children were clapping their hands at every wound, and watching with delight the struggles of the dying beasts. It is a damnable sport! and much to the honour of the English here they all dislike it—very rarely does an Englishman or Englishwoman witness it a second time.

"You will find in Thalaba one accurate image which I observed this evening: a death-sweat *darkening the dun hide* of the animal. This amusement must have mischievous effects; it makes cruelty familiar: and as for the assertion, that bull-baiting, or bull-butchering, keeps up the courage of the nation, only Wyndham and Canning could have been absurd enough and unfeeling enough to believe it;—if it were true, the Spaniards ought to be the bravest nation in the world, because their amusement is the most cruel; and a butcher ought to make the best soldier.

"On Thursday we go to Cintra; this, therefore, will be my last letter of Lisbon anecdote. In Africa a Portuguese saw an ouran-outang, the most human beast that has yet been discovered, walking quietly with a stick in his hand; he had the wickedness to shoot him, and was not, as he ought to have been, hung for wilful murder. The head and hands were sent here; I have seen them in the Museum, in spirits.

I have seen many an uglier fellow pass for a man, in spite of the definition that makes him a reasoning animal: he has eyebrows, and a woolly head, almost like a negro's, but the face not black.

"Fielding died and was buried here. By a singular fatality, four attempts have been made to erect a monument, and all have miscarried. A Frenchman set on foot a subscription for this purpose, and many of the factory engaged for one, two, or three moidores; circumstances took him from Lisbon, and this dropped. Another Frenchman had a monument made at his own expense, and paid for it; there was a fine French inscription, that, as his own countrymen had never given the great Fielding a monument, it was reserved for a Frenchman to honour his country by paying that respect to genius: he also went away, and is now following the French Pretender; and his monument lies among masonry and rubbish, where I have sought for it in vain. Then De Visme undertook the affair; and the bust of Fielding, designed for this purpose, is still in the house which belonged to him here. I know not what made this scheme abortive. Last, the Prince of Brazil went to work, and the monument was made. The Lady Abbess of the New Convent wished to see it; it was sent to her; she took a fancy to it, and there it has remained ever since: and Fielding is still without a monument.

"De Visme introduced the present fashion of painting rooms in stucco, with landscapes on the walls, and borders of flowers or arabesque; the fashion is, I believe, Italian. The workmen whom he employed had taste enough to be pleased with it, and it

is general in all new houses. The ceilings are now painted; thus, instead of the huge layer of boards which was usual, nothing can look more cool, or be more convenient, for a cloth and soap cleans it.

"In the larger old houses, here and in Spain, in the country, there is usually a room with no windows, but, instead, arches quite open to the air; the appearance is strange and picturesque, and I should esteem it one of the inconveniences of Lisbon, that the intolerable dust prevents the enjoyment of these open rooms there—the dust is a huge evil. . . . . We had the hot wind for three days this week; a detestable burning blast, a bastard sort of siroc, tamed by crossing the sea and the land, but which parches the lips, and torments you with the Tantalus plague of fanning your cheek and heating it at the same time. The sea breeze is, on the other hand, as delightful: we feel it immediately; it cools the air, and freshens up all our languid feelings. In the West Indies they call this wind the doctor—a good seamanly phrase for its healing and comfortable effect.

"At the time the aqueduct was built, a large reservoir was made for its waste water. In winter, much water runs to waste; in summer, more is wanted, and the watermen wait a long time round the fountain before they can in turn fill their barrels: but these people, in building the reservoir, never calculated the weight of the water till the building was finished,—so it stands still uncovered, a useless pile, and a rare monument of the national science. I saw a funeral from the country pass the window at night, the attendants

holding torches, and the body in the trunk coffin carried upon a litter (that is, like a sedan chair carried by mules instead of men).

"The servants here, in marketing, think it a part of their fair profits to cheat you as much as they can, and have no idea that this is dishonesty; it is a sort of commission they think they are entitled to. This is so much the case, that one of these fellows, when he was stipulating about wages, thought them too little, and inquired if he was to go to market; he was told yes, and then he said he would come. . . . . .

"The Queen's stables serve as an asylum. Rogues and murderers go there and do the work for nothing; they are safe by this means, and the people, whose business it is to hire and pay the servants, pocket the money, so that they infest the neighbourhood: they quarrelled with our dragoons, who broke into the stables and thrashed them heartily, to the great satisfaction of the people near.

"God bless you! Edith's love.

Yours,

R. S.'

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Cintra, July 23. 1800.

"My dear Wynn,

"You must, long ere this, have received my second letter. I continue in comfortable health, and spirits that cast a sunshine upon every thing. I pray you make peace, that I may return in the spring over

the Pyrenees. The cause would certainly be good, and so would the effects.

"Thalaba is finished, and I am correcting it; the concluding books you shall shortly receive. Giantly is not a coinage, it is sterling English of the old mint; I used it to avoid the sameness of sound in the *Giant Tyrant* as it stood at first. You object to 'fowls of *the air*,'* and do not remember the elision. You object likewise to a licence which I claim as lawful, that of making two short syllables stand for one long one. The eighth book explains enough what Azrael had been doing. The previous uncertainty is well. You will, I trust, find the Paradise a rich poetical picture, a proof that I can employ magnificence and luxury of language when I think them in place. The other faults you point out are removed. Thank you for —— letters. I shall enclose one to him when next I write, the only mode of conveyance with which I am acquainted. —— and I, both of us, were sent into the world with feelings little likely to push us forward in it. One overwhelming propensity has formed my destiny, and marred all prospects of rank or wealth; but it has made me happy, and it will make me immortal. ——, when I was his shadow, was almost my counterpart; but his talents and feelings found no centre, and perforce thus have been scattered: he will probably succeed in worldly prospects far better than I shall do, but he will not be so happy a man, and his genius will bring forth no fruits. I love him dearly, and I

* "I had written at first 'fowls of heaven,' but heaven occurs a few lines above. But the line is wholly altered this way."

know he never can lose the instinctive attachment which led to our boyish intimacy. Yet —— shrunk from me in London. I met him at your rooms; he was the same immutable character: I walked home with him at night; our conversation was unreserved, and, in silence and solitude, I rejoiced even with tears that I had found again the friend that was lost. From that time, a hasty visit is all I saw of him: it was his indolence, — I know he esteems me. Our former coolness I remember among my follies; you were with me when I atoned for it by a voluntary letter, and you saw an answer such as I had reason to expect. I wrote again to him, a common young man's letter; he never answered it: the fact was, I had the disease of epistolising, and he had not. Our future intercourse cannot be much; by the time he returns to London, I trust I shall have retired from it, and pitched my tent near the churchyard in which I shall be buried. Of the East Indies I know not enough to estimate the reason and reasonableness of his dislike. Were I single, it is a country which would tempt me, as offering the shortest and most certain way to wealth, and many curious subjects of literary pursuit. About the language, —— is right; it is a baboon jargon not worth learning; but were I there, I would get the Vedams and get them translated. It is rather disgraceful that the most important acquisition of Oriental learning should have been given us by a Frenchman; but Anquetil du Perron was certainly a far more useful and meritorious Orientalist than Sir Wm. Jones, who disgraced himself by enviously abusing him. Latterly, Sir

William's works are the dreams of dotage. I have some distant view of manufacturing a Hindoo romance, wild as Thalaba; and a nearer one of a Persian story, of which see the germ of vitality. I take the system of the Zendavesta for my mythology, and introduce the powers of darkness persecuting a Persian, one of the hundred and fifty sons of the great king; every evil they inflict, becomes the cause of developing in him some virtue which his prosperity had smothered: an Athenian captive is a prominent character, and the whole warfare of the evil power ends in exalting a Persian prince into a citizen of Athens. I pray you be Greek enough to like that catastrophe, and forget France when you think of Attic republicanism.

"I have written no line of poetry here, except the four books of Thalaba, nor shall I till they are corrected and sent off, and my mind completely delivered of that subject. Some credit may be expected from the poem; and if the booksellers will not give me 100*l.* for a 4to. edition of 500 copies, or 140*l.* for a pocket one of 1000, why they shall not have the poem.

"I long to see the face of a friend, and hunger after the bread-and-butter comforts and green fields of England. Yet do I feel so strongly the good effects of climate, — and I am now perspiring in my shirt while I write, in the coolness of Cintra, a darkened room and a wet floor, — that I certainly wish my lot could be cast somewhere in the south of Europe. The spot I am in is the most beautiful I have ever seen or imagined. I ride a jackass, a fine lazy way of travelling; you have even a boy to beat old Dapple

when he is slow. I eat oranges, figs, and delicious pears, — drink Colares wine, a sort of half-way excellence between port and claret,— read all I can lay my hands on, — dream of poem after poem, and play after play, — take a siesta of two hours, and am as happy as if life were but one everlasting to-day, and that to-morrow was not to be provided for.

"Here is a long letter about myself, and not a word about Portugal. My next shall be a brimming sheet of anecdotes.

"I am sorry —— is so disgusted with India, though I cannot wish he were otherwise. From all accounts, an English East-Indian is a very bad animal; they have adopted by force the luxury of the country, and its tyranny and pride by choice. A man who feels and thinks must be in solitude there. Yet the comfort is, that your wages are certain; so many years of toil for such a fortune at last. Is a young man wise who devotes the best years of his life to such a speculation? Alas! if he is, then am I a pitiable blockhead. But to me, the fable of the ant and grasshopper has long appeared a bad one: the ant hoards and hoards for a season in which he is torpid; the grasshopper — there is one singing merrily among the canes — God bless him! I wish you could see one, with his wings and his vermilion legs.

"God bless you! Write often, and let me have a very long letter upon short paper, as postage is by weight. Remember me to Elmsley; and pray pull Bedford's ears, till *I* hear him bray: I wish my *burro boy* could get at him!"

To Mrs. Southey, Sen.

"Cintra August 21. 1800.

"My dear Mother,

"You will have known, before this can arrive, that your Bristol despatches reached me. That I have not written sooner, is the fault of the wind. We have been three weeks without a packet; and, now we have one, my letters may probably be detained for want of a conveyance to Lisbon. Poor Peggy?* I am impatient for letters: your last was a troubling one, and undid half that Portugal had done for me, However, I am materially amended. Tom writes that she is better; but I know the nature of the disease too well to hope so easily, perhaps, as you and he may have done: however, other diseases there are, undistinguishably similar in their symptoms, which are sometimes mistaken for this, and the patient is said to have recovered from a consumption, when his lungs have been sound all the while.

"We have been here about two months, living alone, and riding jackasses. My uncle is sadly confined in Lisbon: the soldiers' children die as fast as they are born, from inattention or bad management, one of the million war-evils!— and he must bury them. We have acquaintance out of number, but no friends: of course I go among these people no oftener than absolute decorum requires. Patty Collins's niece has more brains than three parts of

* His cousin, Margaret Hill, at this time in very ill health.

the factory: her I like hugely; but she is never at Cintra. I want Danvers here, and Davy, and Rickman, and Cottle, and you, and some fresh butter, and the newspaper: howbeit, I am very comfortable, and very busy. I want you to eat melons; we get them for about three farthings a pound: and grapes — oh! what grapes! Our desserts are magnificent.

"We have three servants here, a man, and maid, and a boy; all good servants for the country.

. . . . . .

"The Roman Catholics have contrived to rank nastiness among Christian virtues, and they practise no other so universally. The poor Moriscoes in Spain were forbidden to use their baths, because it was a Turkish custom. Certain of the austerer monks would think it wicked to kill any of their vermin; others wear no linen, and sleep in their woollen dress from one year to another, — fine, fat, frying friars, looking as oily as Aaron's beard in the sun. I should like to catch a Quaker and bring him here among filth and finery.

"Since we left Lisbon I have written scarcely any letters, and have a week's work to settle my accounts with Tom: tell him that Thalaba has monopolised me; that by the King George, in her next voyage (about three weeks hence), I send over his copy, together with that for the press. Except to Bristol and to Tom, I have neglected all my other correspondents. Actually I have not time: I *must ride;* I am visited; and the correcting Thalaba and transcribing it is a very serious job.

"The French! You are probably alarmed for

us, and, perhaps, not without cause; but we are in the dark, and only know that the situation is very critical. We are quite easy about the matter. The house is on fire! 'Och! and is that all?' said the Paddy; 'now, why did you disturb me? I am but a lodger!' In my own opinion, no attempt will be made on Portugal; it is not worth the trouble. Why make a dust by pulling down a house that must fall? We shall have peace!

"By the next packet I shall write, and send to Biddlecombe his year's rent. When we return, I shall immediately take a house in London, or near it: for a summer or two, Burton may do; but, if Rickman leaves Christchurch, I must look for a situation where there is better society. I wish I could settle here; the climate suits me so well, that I could give up society, and live like a bear by sucking my own paws. You like the Catholics: shall I give you an account of one of their Lent plays upon transubstantiation, which is lying on the table? It begins by the Father turning Adam out of doors. 'Get out of my house, you rascal!' Adam goes a-begging, and bitterly does he complain that he can find no house, no village, no body to beg of. At last he meets the Four Seasons, and they give him a spade, and a plough, &c., but nothing to eat. Then comes Reason, and tells him to go to law with his Father, who is obliged to find him in victuals. Adam goes to law; an Angel is his counsel, and the Devil pleads against him. He wins his cause: and the Father settles upon him oil—for extreme unction; *lamb*; and bread and wine. Up comes the Sacra-

ment, and there is an end of the play. This is written by a priest, one of the best Spanish writers, who has written seventy-two of these plays, all upon the body and blood, and all in the same strain of quaint and pious blasphemy. In another, Christ comes in as a soldier to ask his reward of my Lord World for serving him, and he produces the testimonials of his service:— that, on the eighth day of his enlisting, he was wounded with a knife; that he had a narrow escape when the *infantry* were all cut off; that he went as a spy among the enemies, and even got into their Temple; that he stood a siege of forty days, and would not capitulate, though without provisions, and, after three assaults, put the enemy to flight; that he succoured Castle-Magdalen when the enemy had got possession; that he supplied a camp consisting of more than 5000 persons with food, who would all have been starved; that he did good service at sea in a storm: therefore, for him and his twelve followers, he asked his reward. I could fill sheet after sheet with these Bunyanisms, and send you miracles as strange as any in Thalaba.

"But you are crying out already, and are satisfied with the specimen. Farewell! We are going on well; only Edith's burro fell with her, and threw her overhead down hill, and she is now lame with a bruised knee: she excels in ass-womanship; and I am hugely pleased with riding sideways, and having a boy to beat the John and guide him.

"Harry must forgive me: I do not forget him, and will write very soon; but the interruption it

occasions, and the time it takes up, make letter-writing a serious evil. God bless you.

Your affectionate son,
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Cintra, August 22. 1800.

"My dear Rickman,

"In the long space of three months since I wrote to you (or rather four!), you will expect I have done much. In truth, I have not been idle. For the great history, I have only collected the knowledge of *what* documents to reach, and *where* to seek them. The public-library books are not removable; and I, like all the English, am driven to the cool retirement of Cintra. I have the general facts already in my memory, and I think a fair and accurate opinion of the chief personages, differing very considerably from their received characters; and a map of the method to be pursued. The ground is well manured, and the seed is in. I speak the language, not, indeed, grammatically, but fluently; and Portuguese, *from a familiar voice*, is almost as intelligible to me as English. I know the progress of their language, step by step, and have written materials towards the literary history, of collateral and incidental information — such anecdotes as paint the manners and character of a people. My collection would fill half an octavo volume.

"But Thalaba: it has taken up a greater portion

of my time than I expected or wished. I have been polishing and polishing, adding and adding, and my unlearned readers ought to thank me very heartily for the toil, unpleasant and unproductive, of translating so many notes. By the King George packet I shall send it over, which will probably sail from Lisbon in about three weeks. . . . . The MS. (if the French waylay it not) may reach you the beginning of October at the latest; and, if the booksellers fall into my terms, a London printer will despatch one quarto in a month, or two pocket volumes in a fortnight: 100*l.* I will have for 400 4to. copies, 130*l.* for 1000 of the smaller size. The whole property I will not sell, because I expect the poem will become popular, and of course productive.

. . . . . .

"Our house stands here in a lemon-garden of somewhat less than half an acre. Its fruit usually sells for twenty moidores; this year, owing to its failure, it produced only ten. These orchards, you see, are wonderfully productive, but they require more attention than any English crops. They are watered regularly. Here there is a large tank in every garden, whence the water is conveyed by little channels, which the man conducts round the roots of every tree, loosening the soil with a hoe: by this the leaves, as they fall, are sooner mingled with the soil, and afford a constant manure. Wages are as high as eighteen-pence a day, *with* wine. The price of bread, of course, can differ little from its price in England; all other provisions are rather dearer, in some respects owing to actual scarcity, still more to the paper

money, as every tradesman will have his profit upon the discount. The wine owes its advance to the enormous taxes in England. As the English tax it so highly, said the government here, we will tax it too; and they laid on the very moderate duty of a six-and-thirty per pipe. If people will give 75*l.* a pipe, said the Porto merchants, no doubt they will give 80*l.*, and we will have our profit. They therefore laid on the five, and are making fortunes. *More* wine is imported than before the new duties, because the excise, to which it is subject, so materially checks the home-brewed; still much is manufactured. By an accident I happened to *know* that one merchant made his own Lisbon.

"No debtor is imprisoned here; shame, shame to our own laws! There is a Board of Bankruptcy — an institution, perhaps, of unequalled absurdity, so is it managed. Any debtor who will surrender all his effects to the board, receives 10 per cent. It has been established about thirty years, and *they have never made one dividend.* Where goes the money? There is a fund for cleaning and lighting the city. There are no lamps and no scavengers. Where goes the fund?

. . . . .

"The number of monastics decreases; not from any dearth of laziness or fanaticism, but because the revenues are not now equal to the support of the original number. Sometimes the monks desert; in that case they pursue them. They took one poor fellow at work in a garden, where, for three months, he had been usefully employed, and enjoying freedom. . . . .

"Here is a fine soil of folly, and a plentiful crop do the friars reap! Some little good they do in return. They are good landlords, and the church lands are the only lands that are tolerably cultivated. The ruin of Spain and Portugal is, the fashion that all the wealthy have, of residing wholly in the metropolis, where they spend to the uttermost, vex their tenants, and never pay their debts. Portugal, you say, *must* have bad roads. It will be very difficult to make them good. In winter the very heavy rains wash away all the smaller parts, and leave only the larger stones; in summer the sun dries them up, and the wind sweeps the stones bare. Brentford stones would be thought a fine road here. Hence slow and little travelling, and bad inns; in country towns no booksellers! scarcely any reading anywhere. Like beasts and savages, the people can bear total indolence. Their delight is to look into the street, put somebody to hunt their heads at the same time, and it is happiness! Even in their garden walls they have grates to look into the road. . . . .

"I lack society sadly. The people here know much of their own business, very little of the country they live in, and nothing of anything else except cards. My uncle, indeed, is a man of extensive knowledge; and here is one family, of which the master is a man of some science, and where I can open my flood-gates. I want you and Davy, and a newspaper, and bread-and-butter, and a green field for me and the horse: it would do his old English heart as much good as it would mine. But I have ample and pleasant employment: curiosity for ever

on the hunt — a situation the most beautiful that I have ever seen, and a climate for which Nature seems to have destined me, only, blessed be God, she dropt me the other side of the bay. . . . . Edith's remembrance. Farewell!

Yours,
R. SOUTHEY."

To Henry Southey.

"Cintra, August 25. 1800.

"My dear Harry,

. . . . . .

"On my return to England in the next spring, I shall take a house in or near London, where you shall live with me and study anatomy at the Westminster Hospital, under Carlisle, whom you know to be a man of genius and my friend. By the time you have acquired enough previous knowledge, I trust some of my eggs will have hatched, so that you may graduate either at Edinburgh or in Germany, as shall appear best. Till my return you will remain where you are; you are well employed, and evidently improving rapidly. Nor is there any home to which you possibly could remove! On my return you will have one, and I trust more comfortable than any you have yet had. We are rising in the world; it is our turn, and will be our own faults if we do not, all of us, attain that station in the world to which our intellectual rank entitles us.

"Attend to prose particularly; excellence in that

is acquirable: you know the value of literature, and may, perhaps, one day find it, as I have done, a resource as well as a delight. In your course of history, Gibbon must be read: it is the link that connects ancient with modern history. For the history of Portugal you must wait; there is none but that in the Universal History. It is a fine subject, and you will see, on my return, a skeleton — I hope half-musiled.

"Thalaba has taken up too much of my time, and I am eager to send it off, and wash my hands of all that could have been written in England: it is finished, and half ready for the press. I am polishing and polishing, and hewing it to pieces with surgeon severity. Yesterday I drew the pen across six hundred lines, and am now writing to you instead of supplying their place. It goes over for publication very shortly — I trust in three weeks. Rickman is my agent and supervisor of the press. I am sorry you do not know Rickman. I esteem him among the first men of my knowledge. . . . . .

. . . . . For six weeks we have been at Cintra — a spot the most beautiful that I have ever seen, and which is probably unique. Eighteen miles distant, at Lisbon, the sun is insupportable. Here we are cool, with woods and water. The wealthier English are all here; still, however, I lack society, and, were it not for a self-sufficiency (like the bear, who sucks his paws when the snow shuts him up in his den), should be in a state of mental famine. My uncle is little here; people will die, and must be buried. He is a man of extensive information; his

library very well furnished, and he very well acquainted with its contents. One Englishman here only talks politics with me; his taste in French is everything, and in all else mine is right English and Antigallican. The English here know very little of the country they live in, and nothing of the literature. Of Camoens they have heard, and only of Camoens. By the help of my uncle I have acquired an extensive knowledge, and am almost as well acquainted with Portuguese literature, as with that of my own country. It is not worth much; but it is not from the rose and the violet only that the bee sucks honey.

"You would be amused could you see Edith and myself on ass-back — I sitting sideways, gloriously lazy, with a boy to beat my Bayardo, as well adapted to me, as ever that wild courser was to Rinaldo. In this climate there is no walking; a little exercise heats so immoderately: but their cork woods or fir woods, and mountain glens, and rock pyramids, and ever-flowing fountains, and lemon-groves ever in flower and in fruit, want only society to become a Paradise. Could I but colonise Cintra, with half-a-dozen familiars, I should wish never to leave it. As it is, I am comfortable, my health establishing itself, my spirits everlastingly partaking the sunshine of the climate; yet I *do* hunger after the bread-and-butter, and the fire-side comforts, and the intellect of England. You will, I think, whenever my library is at hand, learn Portuguese, because I have got the history of Charlemagne and the Twelve Paladins in that language, and Palmerin of England. I have only laid hands on half an old Spanish romance, Don

Florisel, son of Amadis of Greece, who was a perfect Jack the Giant Killer, and has taught me to forgive Don Quixote for knocking knight-errantry on the head. Bad poetry I find in abundance. . . . . The Portuguese Academy published a book in honour of the victories of the Empress-Queen Maria Theresa. My literary history will have a chapter upon the follies of literature, in which this work will furnish my best example: every possible form of acrostic is there; poems to read up and down, and athwart and across; crosses, and circles, and wheels. Literature is almost dead here. More books are published annually at Bristol than in Portugal. There are no books to induce a love of reading—no Arabian Tales or Seven Champions. . . . . In case of peace,—and surely, surely, it must come —we shall return through Spain and France. I am anxious to see Biscay. Our man Bento, who served in the Spanish army against France, has given me a curious account of that province, where the people are clean, industrious, and free, and speak Welsh or something very like it. On entering France, one of the Spanish generals ordered his company to kill man, woman, and child: in Roncesvalles (where Orlando and the Paladins were slain), a little boy of about six years was playing on a wall; he stopped to look at the troops; Bento saw one of his fellow-soldiers, in obedience to these orders, cut off the child's head. 'I have seen a thousand men killed,' said he, when he told the story, 'but I never felt any pain except when I saw that poor child murdered.' What is to be the fate of Portugal? We know not. Much is

going on, but all in secrecy. I expect peace every where. Bonaparte ought not to have risked that battle—to stake so much on one game! Moreau would not have done it—it was a prodigality of human blood merely to please the Parisians. . . .

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,
R. S."

To Lieutenant Southey, H.M.S. Bellona.

"October 6. 1800.

"You saw Mafra from the sea, a magnificent object, but, like every thing in Portugal, it looks best at a distance; its history you know from the last letter in my first edition.* . . . . . We yesterday went there from Cintra, a distance of three leagues (twelve miles). A quinta of the Marquis Pombal, on the way, forms a pleasing object from the olives which are planted to screen the vines; the grey foliage and the lively sunshine, as it were, of the vines contrasting very well. The quarries are near where the first stone is dug for the Lisbon buildings; two columns are now lying by the road, which in the great Pombal's time were hewn for the Square of Lisbon, each of a single stone—a foolish waste of labour, only becoming barbarian pride; for

columns whose parts are put together upon the spot look as well, and are in reality as firm: there they lie, like the square itself, and the half-finished streets, monuments to the memory of Pombal.

"Two leagues on the way lies a place called Cheleinas; it may contain fifty scattered houses, I assuredly speak on the outside of its number, but the place is a *town*, and its inhabitants strangely jealous of its title. Some lads, lately passing through, inquired the name of the *village;* the man replied, angrily, it was a town; and as they, not believing it, laughed at him, he raised an uproar, and they were actually in danger of being stoned by the offended townsmen. A bridge has been lately built here over a valley, and a great work it is; it happens to be in the Prince's road from Queluz to Mafra, and on that account this improvement has been made. The valley, in which Cheleinas stands, would not be noticed for beauty in a cultivated country, but here it appears beautiful from the contrast of vine and olive yards with naked and sun-burnt hills: the people are in fault, not the climate; trees will grow wherever they will plant them, but planting indicates foresight, and Portuguese never think of the future. A stream runs through it, which in the rainy season must be wide and rapid; this sweeps down the soil from the mountains, and fertilizes the bottom. A circuitous road round the hill-top, to avoid a steep descent, leads to Mafra; there is a bye-path, nearer by two miles, which I advise none but a pedestrian to take. Mafra itself is a small place, the estalagem rather better than usual, and not worse than a dirty English alehouse.

Saturday had been the day of St. Francisco, a holyday in all Franciscan communities, more especially there because the Prince conceives himself under great obligations to St. Francisco, and regularly attends his festival at Mafra. Of course the country was assembled there, food and fruit exposed for sale in the Plaza, and all the women equipped in all their finery. We went to mass; the Prince followed the Host as it was carried round the church: in the evening there was a procession, and the Prince paraded with it; and thus the Regent of Portugal passes his time, dangling after saints, and assisting at puppet-shows, and no doubt he lay down last night thoroughly satisfied that he had done his duty.

"The church and convent and palace are one vast building, whose front exhibits a strange and truly Portuguese mixture of magnificence and meanness; in fact it has never been faced with stone, a mud plaster is in its place; the windows are not half glazed, red boards filling up the workhouse-looking casements. The church is beautiful; the library the finest book-room I ever saw, and well stored. The friar who accompanied us said 'it would be an excellent room to eat and drink in, and go to play afterwards;' and 'if we liked better to play in the dark, we might shut the windows!' He heard the servant remark to me that there were books enough for me to read there, and asked if I loved reading. 'And I,' said he, 'love eating and drinking.' Honest Franciscan! He told us, also, that the dress of their order was a barbarous dress, and that dress did not change the feelings. I suspect this man wishes he had professed in France.

A Portuguese of some family was a nun in France: after the dissolution of the monasteries, her brother immediately engaged with a Portuguese abbess to receive her, and wrote in all haste for the distressed nun; she wrote, in answer, that she was much obliged to him, but she was married.

"'You have a superb convent here,' said I. 'Yes,' said the monk, 'but it is a wretched place in winter, we suffer so from the cold; the rheumatism kills many; we have no fire in our cells, only in the kitchen.' Such is Mafra: a library, whose books are never used; a palace, with a mud-wall front; and a royal convent, inhabited by monks who loathe their situation. The monks often desert; in that case they are hunted like deserters, and punished, if caught, with confinement and flogging. They take the vows young — at fourteen: those who are most stupidly devout may be satisfied with their life; those who are most abandoned in all vice may do well also; but a man with any feeling, any conscience, any brains, must be miserable. The old men, whose necks are broken to their yoke, whose feelings are all blunted, and who are, by their rank or age, exempt from some services, and indulged with some privileges, — these men are happy enough. A literary man would be well off, only that literature would open his eyes.

"The library was not originally a part of the foundation: the Franciscan order excluded all art, all science; no pictures might profane their churches; but when Pombal turned them out of this palace, he removed to it the regular canons of St. Vincent, an order well born and well educated, wealthy

enough to support themselves, and learned enough to instruct others. His design was to make Mafra a sort of college for the education of the young Portuguese; the library was formed with this intention: in what manner this plan was subverted by the present Prince, you may see in the old 'Letters;' incredibly absurd as the story may appear, it is nevertheless strictly true.

"The Franciscan is by far the most numerous monastic family. A convent that subsists upon its revenues must necessarily be limited in its numbers, but every consecrated beggar gets more than enough for his own support; so the more the merrier. . . . . God bless you! I conclude in haste.

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Bellona.

"Cintra, Oct. 7. 1800.

"My dear Tom,

". . . . You have probably heard enough of the infection at Cadiz to be anxious for information? Our accounts agree in nothing but in the extent of the calamity: one day we are assured it is the black vomit, another day the yellow fever, and now it is ripened into the plague. This only is certain, that for the last ten or twelve days of our accounts, from 240 to 260 persons have died daily in Cadiz. Whether it has extended beyond that city is also uncertain; some reports say that it has spread to the

south — to Malaga and Alicant; others bring it to the frontier town, within 200 miles of us. We all think and talk seriously of our danger, and forget it the moment the conversation is changed. Whenever it actually enters Portugal we shall probably fly to England. I hope the rains, which we may soon expect, will stop the contagion.

"So much have I to tell you, that it actually puzzles me where to begin. My Cintra memorandums must be made; and more than once have I delayed the task of describing this place from a feeling of its difficulty. There is no scenery in England which can help me to give you an idea of this. The town is small, like all country towns of Portugal, containing the Plaza or square, and a number of narrow crooked streets that wind down the hill: the palace is old — remarkably irregular — a large, rambling, shapeless pile, not unlike the prints I have seen in old romances of a castle,—a place whose infinite corners overlook the sea; two white towers, like glass houses exactly, form a prominent feature in the distance, and with a square tower mark it for an old and public edifice. From the Valley the town appears to stand very high, and the ways up are long, and winding, and weary; but the town itself is far below the summit of the mountain. You have seen the *Rock of Lisbon* from the sea,—that rock is the *Sierra* or mountain of Cintra: above, it is broken into a number of pyramidal summits of rock piled upon rock; two of them are wooded completely, the rest bare. Upon one stands the Penha convent,—a place where, if the Chapel of Loretto had stood,

one might have half credited the lying legend, that the angels or the devil had dropped it there — so unascendable the height appears on which it stands, yet is the way up easy. On another point the ruins of a Moorish castle crest the hills. To look down from hence upon the palace and town my head grew giddy, yet is it farther from the town to the valley than from the summit to the town. The road is like a terrace, now with the open heath on the left, all purple with heath flowers, and here and there the stony summits and coombs winding to the vale, luxuriantly wooded, chiefly with cork trees; descending as you advance towards Colares, the summits are covered with firs, and the valley appears in all the richness of a fertile soil under this blessed climate.

"The cork is perhaps the most beautiful of trees: its leaves are small, and have the dusky colour of evergreens, but its boughs branch out in the fantastic twistings of the oak, and its bark is of all others the most picturesque;—you have seen deal curl under the carpenter's plane — it grows in such curls, — the wrinkles are of course deep, one might fancy the cavities the cells of hermit fairies. There is one tree in particular here which a painter might well come from England to see, large and old; its trunk and branches are covered with fern — the yellow sunburnt fern — forming so sunny a contrast to the dark foliage! — a wild vine winds up and hangs in festoons from the boughs, its leaves of a bright green, like youth, — and now the purple clusters are ripe. These vines form a delightful feature in the scenery; the vineyard is cheerful to the eyes, but it is the wild

vine that I love, — matting over the hedges, or climbing the cork or the tall poplar, or twisting over the grey olive in all its unpruned wantonness. The chestnut also is beautiful; its blossoms shoot out in *rays* like stars, and now its hedge-hog fruit stars the dark leaves. We have yet another tree of exquisite effect in the landscape — the fir; — not such as you have seen, but one that shoots out no branches, grows very high, and then spreads broad in a mushroom shape exactly — the bottom of its head of the brown and withered colour that the yew and the fir always have, and the surface of the brightest green. If a mushroom serves as the Pantheon Dome for a faery hall — you might conceive a giant picking one of these pines for a parasol — they have somewhat the appearance in distance that the palm and cocoa has in a print.

"The English are numerous here, enough to render it a tolerable market, for sellers will not be wanting where purchasers are to be found; yet, last year, the magistrate of the place was idiot enough to order that no Englishman should be served, till all the Portuguese were satisfied, — one of those laws which carries its antidote in its own absurdity. Among this people the English are in high favour; they are liberal, or if you will, extravagant, and submit to imposition; now a Portuguese fights hard for a farthing, — servants love to be in an English family. If a Portuguese mistress goes out she locks up her maids for fear of the men; the relations of the servants often insist that this shall be done. Oftentimes the men and women of a family do not know each other.

All kitchen work is done by men, who sleep and live below; the females are kept above, a precious symptom of national morals! calculated to extend the evil it is designed to prevent; — but I wander from Cintra. The fire flies were abundant when we first came here; it was like faery land to see them sparkling under the trees at night; the glow-worms were also numerous,—their light went out at the end of July; but we have an insect which almost supplies their places,—a winged grasshopper, in shape like our own; in colour a grey ground hue, undistinguishable from the soil on which they live, till they leap up, and their expanded wings then appear like a purple: we hear at evening the grillo — it is called the cricket, because its song is like that animal, but louder; it is, however, wholly different, — shaped like a beetle, with wings like a bee, and black: — they sell them in cages at Lisbon by way of singing birds.

"We ride asses about the country: you would laugh to see a party thus mounted; and yet soon learn to like the easy pace and sure step of the John *burros*. At the south-western extremity of the rock is a singular building which we have twice visited,— a chapel to the Virgin (who is omnipresent in Portugal), on one of the stony summits, far from any house: it is the strangest mixture you can imagine of art and nature; you scarcely, on approaching, know what is rock and what is building, and from the shape and position of the chapel itself, it looks like the ark left by the waters upon Mount Ararat. Long flights of steps lead up, and among the rocks

are many rooms, designed to house the pilgrims who frequent the place. A poor family live below with the keys. From this spot the coast lies like a map below you to Cape Espichel with the Tagus. 'Tis a strange place, that catches every cloud, and I have felt a tempest there when there has been no wind below. In case of plague it would be an excellent asylum. At the north-western extremity is a rock which we have not yet visited, where people go to see fishermen run the risk of breaking their necks, by walking down a precipice. I have said nothing to you of the wild flowers, so many and so beautiful; purple crocusses now cover the ground; nor of the flocks of goats that morning and evening pass our door; nor of the lemon venders, — of these hereafter.

"Our Lady of the Incarnation will about fill the sheet. Every church has a fraternity attached to its patron saint; for the anniversary festival they beg money, what is deficient the chief of the brotherhood supplies; for there are four days preceding the holiday; thus people parade the country with the church banner, taking a longer or a shorter circuit according to the celebrity of the saint, attacking the sun with sky-rockets, and merry making all the way. Those of whom I now speak travelled for five days. I saw them return; — they had among them four *angels on horseback*, who, as they took leave of the Virgin at her church-door, each alternately addressed her, and reminded her of all they had been doing to her honour and glory, and requested her to continue the same devout spirit in *her* Portuguese, which must

infallibly render them *still* invincible; this done, the angels went into the Plaza to see the fireworks!

. . . . . .

Yours truly,
R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"October, 1800.

"My dear Rickman,

"At last the opportunity is arrived of sending my important parcel.* My private instructions must be vague, — to make the best bargain you can, and on no terms to sell the copyright. . . . . Longman will probably offer to advance the expense of publishing, and share the profits: this is not fair, as brains ought to bear a higher interest than money. If you are not satisfied with his terms, offer it to Arch, in Gracechurch Street, or to Philips of the Monthly Magazine, a man who can afford to pay a good price, because he can advertize and puff his own property every month. The sale of the book is not doubtful; my name would carry it through an edition though it were worthless. . . . . .

"In literature, as in the playthings of schoolboys and the frippery of women, there are the ins and outs of fashion. Sonnets and satires and essays have their day, — and my Joan of Arc has revived the epomania that Boileau cured the French of 120 years ago; but it is not every one who can shoot with the bow

* The MSS. of Thalaba.

of Ulysses, and the gentlemen who think they can bend the bow because I made the string twang, will find themselves somewhat disappointed. Whenever that poem requires a new edition, I think not of correcting it; the ore deserves not to be new cast; but of prefixing a fair estimate of its merits and defects. . . . . .

"Foreign Jews are tolerated in Lisbon,—that is, they are in no danger from the Inquisition, though forbidden to exercise the ceremonials of their faith; the intercourse with Barbary brings a few Moors here, so that the devout Portuguese are accustomed to the sight of Jews, Turks, and heretics. You remember Davy's story of the Cornishman's remark when his master said, 'Now, John, we are in Devonshire,' 'I don't see but the pigs have got tails the same as along o' we;' if the natives here have sense enough to make a similar inference, they will be one degree wiser than their forefathers. Lisbon grows; many a cornfield in which I have walked five years ago, is now covered with houses: this is a short-lived increase of population — a fine February day — for the English tenant these habitations — and when the army shall be recalled, the houses will be desolate: but the city exhibits an unequivocal sign of recovering industry and opulence; the gaps in the new streets that have stood vacant since the disgrace of Portal, are now filled up, or filling; these are not nests for passage-birds, but large and magnificent houses for the merchants.

"But commerce will for a long, long while be, as in America, a sordid, selfish, money-getting drudgery,

encouraging no art, and ignorant of every science. It is not genius that is wanted in Portugal, genius exists everywhere; but encouragement, or the hope of encouragement, must waken it to action; and here no ambition can exist, except the desire of place and court pageantry: a man of letters, a philosopher, would starve here, — a fine singer and a female dancer are followed as in London. . . . . The Italian Opera is, in my mind, only high treason against common sense: nothing is attended to but the music, the drama is simply a substratum for the tune, and the mind lies fallow while the sensual ear is gratified. The encouragement of a national theatre may call up talents, that shall confer honour upon the nation.

"My first publication will probably be the literary part of the History, which is too important to be treated of in an appendix, or in separate and interrupting chapters. Lisbon is rich in the books which suit my purpose; but I, alas! am not rich, and endure somewhat of the tortures of Tantalus. The public library is, indeed, more accessible than our Museum, &c. in England; but the books are under wire cases, and the freedom of research is miserably shackled by the necessity of asking the librarian for every volume you wish to consult: to hunt a subject through a series of authors, is thus rendered almost impossible. The Academy, however, have much facilitated my labour by publishing many of their old chronicles in a buyable shape; and also the old laws of Portugal. There is a Frenchman here busy upon the history of Brazil; — his materials are excellent, and he is in-

defatigable: but I am apprehensive for his papers, even if his person should escape: the ministry know what he is about, and you need not be told with what an absurd secrecy they hide from the world all information respecting that country: the population of Brazil is said to double that of the mother, and now dependent, country. So heavy a branch cannot long remain upon so rotten a trunk. God bless you.

Yours truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Mrs. Southey, Sen.

"Lisbon [no date].

"My dear Mother,

". . . . . .

. . . . About Harry, it is necessary to remove him,—his room is wanted for a more profitable pupil, and he has outgrown his situation. I have an excellent letter from him, and one from William Taylor, advising me to place him with some provincial surgeon of eminence, who will for a hundred guineas board and instruct him for four or five years; — a hundred guineas! well, but thank God, there is Thalaba ready, for which I ask this sum. I have therefore thus eat my calf, and desired William Taylor to inquire for a situation,—and so once more goes the furniture of my long expected house in London.* . . . . . .

. . . . . .

* The sum ultimately received for the first edition of Thalaba (115*l.*) was not required for this purpose; the fee for his brother's surgical education being paid by Mr. Hill.

The plague, or the yellow fever, or the black vomit, has not yet reached us, nor do we yet know what the disease is, though it is not three hundred miles from us, and kills five hundred a day at Seville! Contagious by clothes or paper it cannot be, or certainly it would have been here. A man was at Cintra who had recovered from the disease, and escaped from Cadiz only seventeen days before he told the story in a pot-house here. In Cadiz it might have been confined, because that city is connected by a bridge with the main land; but once beyond that limit, and it must take its course,—precautions are impossible; the only one in their power they do not take, — that of suffering no boat to come from the opposite shore. Edith is for packing off to England, but I will not move till it comes, and then away for the mountains.

"Our weather is most delightful, — not a cloud, cool enough to walk, and warm enough to sit still; purple evenings, and moonlight more distinct than a November noon in London. We think of mounting jackasses and rambling some two hundred miles in the country. I shall laugh to see Edith among the dirt and fleas, who I suspect will be more amused with her than she will with them. She is going in a few days to visit the nuns: they wanted to borrow some books of an English woman,—'What book would you like?' said Miss Petre, somewhat puzzled by the question, and anxious to know. 'Why, we should like novels; — have you got Ethelinde, or the Recluse of the Lake? we have had the first volume, and it was so interesting! and it leaves off

in such an interesting part! We used to hate to hear the bell for prayers while we were reading it.' And after a little pause she went on: 'and then it is such *a good* book; we liked it, because the characters are so *moral and virtuous.*' By the by, they have sent Edith some cakes.

"We are afraid the expedition under Sir Ralph Abercrombie is coming here: his men are dying of the scurvy, and have been for some time upon a short allowance of salt provisions; they will starve us if they come. What folly, to keep five-and-twenty thousand men floating about so many months! horses and soldiers both dying for want of fresh food. . .

. . . . . .

God bless you.

Your affectionate son,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Bellona.

"Thursday, Feb. 12. 1801. Lisbon.

"On Tuesday we crossed the river to Casilhas Point, procured jackasses and proceeded to a place called Costa to dinner. You know the castle in the mouth of the Tagus, the state prison, where the man is confined that beat the king. The Costa is a collection of fishermen's huts on the sand, in a line with it, on the south side of the river: the ride is about seven miles, over a hilly country, that everywhere displayed novel and striking views; for the foreground, huge aloes and the prickly pear, the broom

and furze in blossom,—broad-headed firs everywhere where the sandy soil was not cultivated for vines or olives; the sweep of the bay southward skirted by the pine-covered plains and the mountain boundary; behind us Lisbon on its heights, and the river blue and boundless as a sea. Through a cleft in a sand bank, a winter ravine way for the rains, we first saw the Costa at about half a mile below us,— the most singular view I ever beheld,—huts all of thatch scattered upon the sand: we descended by a very steep way cut through the sand hill, the sand on either side fretted by the weather, like old sculpture long weather worn,—all below belongs to the sea; but on the bare sands, a numerous tribe have fixed their habitations, which exactly resemble the wigwams of the Nootka savages,—a wooden frame all thatched is all; most commonly the floor descends for warmth, and the window often on a level with the ground without; two only symptoms showed us that we were in a civilised country,—a church, the only stone building, and a party stretched upon the sand at cards. The men live by fishing, and a stronger race I never saw, or more prolific, for children seemed to swarm. As parties from Lisbon are frequent here, there are two or three hovels of entertainment. Ours had ragged rhymes upon its walls, recommending us to drink by the barrel and not by the quart.

"In riding to Odwellas, I saw something curious: it was a Padroña by the road side,— we have no other word in English, and it occurs often in romance, for a place raised by the way side, — where a station or inscription is placed: there was an image of Christ there,

and some unaccountable inscriptions about robbery, and hiding heaven in the earth, which a series of pictures in tiles behind explained. A hundred years ago, the church of Odwellas was robbed of the church plate, and of the sacrament. Then I saw the thief playing at skittles when the sacristan of the church past by, whom he followed in and hid himself; then I saw him robbing the altar; next, he hides the church dresses in the house of a woman; and here he is burying the sacrament plate in a vineyard upon this very spot; here he is examined upon suspicion and denies all, and says who ever did the sacrilege ought to have his hands cut off; here he is taken in the act of stealing the fowls of the convent, and he confesses all; here they dig up the hidden treasure, and carry it back in a solemn procession; here he is going to execution; here you see his hands cut off according to his own sentence, and here he is strangled and burnt. It is remarkable that in almost all these tiles, the face of the criminal is broken to pieces, probably in abhorrence of his guilt. The loss of the wafer has been ever regarded as a national calamity, to be lamented with public prayer and fasts and processions. It happened at Mexico in the Conqueror's days, and Cortes himself paraded with the monks and the mob.

"Sat. March 28

"In the long interval that has elapsed since this letter was begun, we have travelled about three hundred and fifty miles. Waterhouse and I took

charge of Edith and three ladies; a doctor at Alvea da Cruz, of whom we besought house room one night in distress, told us, with more truth than politeness, that four women were a mighty inconvenience. We did not find them so; they made our chocolate in the morning, laughed with us by day, enjoyed the scenery, packed our provisions basket, and at night endured flea-biting with a patience that entitles them to an honourable place in the next martyrology. All Lisbon, I believe, thought us mad when we set out; and they now regard our return with equal envy, as only our complexions have suffered. To detail the journey would be too long. We asked at Santarem if they had rooms for us,—they said plenty: we begged to see them; they had two rooms, — four men in bed in one, one fellow in bed in the other. At Pombal, Waterhouse and I slept in public, in a room that served as a passage for the family. Men and women indiscriminately made the ladies' beds; one night we passed through a room wherein eight men were sleeping, who rose up to look at us, something like a picture of the resurrection. These facts will enable you to judge of the comforts and decencies of the Portuguese. They once wanted us, four women and two men, to sleep in two beds in one room. Yet, bad as these places are, the mail coach has made them still worse; that is, it has rendered the people less civil, and made the expenses heavier.

"We crossed the Zezere, a river of importance in the history of Portugal, as its banks form the great protection of Lisbon; it is the place where a stand

might most effectually be made against an invading army; the river is fine, about the width of our Avon at Rownham, and flowing between hills of our Clifton and Leigh height that are covered with heath and gum-cistus; the water is beautifully clear, and the bottom sand: like all mountain streams, the Zezere is of irregular and untameable force. In summer, horsemen ford it; in winter, the ferry price varies, according to the resistance of the current, from one vintem to nine,—that is, from a penny to a shilling. It then enters the Tagus with equal waters, sometimes with a larger body; for, as the rains may have fallen heavier east or north, the one river with its rush almost stagnates the other.

"At Pombal we saw Our Lady's oven, where annually a fire is kindled, a wafer baked, and a man, the Shadrach of the town, walks round the glowing oven and comes out unhurt and unsinged by special miracle of Our Lady of Cardal. At Thomar is a statue of St. Christofer on the bridge: three grains of his leg, taken in a glass of water, are a sovereign cure for the ague; and poor St. Christofer's legs are almost worn out by the extent of the practice. Torres Vedras is the place where Father Anthony of the wounds died — a man suspected of sanctity. The pious mob attacked his body, stripped it naked, cut off all his hair, and tore up his nails to keep for relics. I have seen relics of all the saints, — yea, a thorn from the crown of crucifixion, and a drop of the Redemption blood. All this you shall hereafter see at length in the regular journal.

"A more interesting subject is our return. My

uncle will, I think, return with us; or, at least, speedily follow. We look forward to the expulsion of the English as only avoidable by a general peace, and this so little probable, that all preparations are making for removal. My uncle is sending away all his books; and I am now in the dirt of packing. In May, I hope to be in Bristol; eager enough, God knows, to see old friends and old familiar scenes; but with no pleasant anticipation of English taxes, and English climate, and small beer, after this blessed sun, and the wines of Portugal. My health has received all the benefit I could and did expect: a longer residence would, I think, render the amendment permanent; and, with this idea, the prospect of a return hereafter, to complete the latter part of my History, is by no means unpleasant.

"God bless you and keep you from the north seas. I have written in haste, being obliged to write many letters on my return. Edith's love. I know not when or where we shall meet; but, when I am on English ground, the distance between us will not be so impassable. Farewell!

Yours truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Lisbon, Feb. 21. 1801.

"My dear Wynn,

"Your letter gave me the first detail of the great news. A passage of four days made it as fresh as possible, and we are here cursing winds and water

that we must wait a fortnight before another mail can reach us. What will happen? the breach is made; and this lath and plaster cannot long keep out the weather. Will the old administration be strong enough to force their plans upon the crown? Possibly. Equally so, that the art of alarming, in which they were so proficient, may now be turned successfully against them. Yet, on this point, the whole body of Opposition is with them, and the whole intellect of the country. I rather expect, after more inefficient changes, the establishment of Opposition — and peace. The helm requires a strong hand.

"Decidedly as my own principles lead to toleration, I yet think in the sufferance of converts and proselytism it has been carried too far. You might as well let a fire burn or a pestilence spread, as suffer the propagation of popery. I hate and abhor it from the bottom of my soul, and the only antidote is poison. Voltaire and such writers cut up the wheat with the tares. The monastic establishments in England ought to be dissolved; as for the priests, they will, for the most part, find their way into France; they who remain should not be suffered to recruit, and would soon die away in peace. I half fear a breach of the Union, perhaps another rebellion, in that wretched country.

"I do not purpose returning till the year of my house-rent be complete, and shall then leave Lisbon with regret, in spite of English-house comforts, and the all-in-all happiness of living among old friends and familiar faces. This climate so completely changes my whole animal being, that I would ex-

change every thing for it. It is not Lisbon; — Italy, or the south of Spain or of France, would, perhaps, offer greater inducements, if the possibility of a foreign settlement existed.

"On my History no labour shall be spared. Now, I only heap marble: the edifice must be erected in England; but I must return again to the quarry. You will find my style plain and short, and of condensed meaning, — plain as a Doric building, and, I trust, of eternal durability. The notes will drain off all quaintness. I have no doubt of making a work by which I shall be honourably remembered. You shall see it, and Elmsly if he will take the trouble, before publication. Of profit I must not be sanguine; yet, if it attain the reputation of Robertson, than whom it will not be worse, or of Roscoe and Gibbon, it will procure me something more substantial than fame. My price for Thalaba was, for 1000 copies, 115*l.*, twelve copies being allowed me; the booksellers would have bargained for a quarto edition also, but it would have been ill-judged to have glutted the public.

"I expect, in the ensuing winter, to be ready with my first volume: to hurry it would be injudicious, and historic labour will be relieved by employing myself in correcting Madoc. My intention is therefore to journey through North Wales next summer to the Lakes, where Coleridge is settled, and to pass the autumn (their summer) there. For a Welsh map of the roads, and what is to be seen, you must be my director; perhaps, too, you might in another way assist Madoc, by pointing out what manners or

superstition of the Welsh would look well in blank verse. Much may have escaped me, and some necessarily must. Long as this poem (from the age of fourteen) has been in my head, and long as its sketch has now lain by me, I now look on at no very distant date to its publication, after an ample revision and recasting. You will see it and scrutinise it when corrected.

"Thalaba is now a whole and unembarrassed story; the introduction of Laila is not an episode, it is so connected with the murder of Hodeirah and the after actions of Thalaba, as to be essentially part of the tale. Thalaba has certainly and inevitably the fault of Samson Agonistes, — its parts might change place; but, in a romance, epic laws may be dispensed with; its faults now are verbal: such as it is, I know no poem which can claim a place between it and the Orlando. Let it be weighed with the Oberon; perhaps, were I to speak out, I should not dread a trial with Ariosto. My proportion of ore to dross is greater: perhaps the Anti-Jacobin criticasters may spare Thalaba; it is so utterly innocent of all good drift; it may pass through the world like Richard Cromwell, notwithstanding the sweet savour of its father's name. Do you know that they have caricatured me between Fox and Norfolk — worshipping Bonaparte? Poor me — at Lisbon — who have certainly molested nothing but Portuguese spiders! Amen! I am only afraid my company will be ashamed of me; one at least, — he is too good for me; and, upon my soul, I think myself too good for the other.

"¶ The Spanish ambassador trundled off for Madrid this morning—he is a bad imitation of a hogshead in make: all is alarm here; and I sweat in dreadfully cold weather for my books, creditors, alas for many a six-and-thirty! We have two allies, more faithful than Austria the honest or Paul the magnanimous,—famine and the yellow fever; but the American gentleman is asleep till summer, and, as for famine, she is as busy in England as here. I rejoice in the eventual effects of scarcity — the cultivation of the wastes; the population bills you probably know to be Rickman's, for which he has long been soliciting Rose, and the management is his of course and compliment. It is of important utility.

"Of the red wines I spoke in my last. Will you have Bucellas as it can be got? It should be kept rather in a garret than a cellar, a place dry and warm; but ample directions shall be sent with it. You may, perhaps, get *old* now, when so just an alarm prevails; *new* is better than none, because it will improve even in ideal value, should Portugal be closed to England; its price will little, if at all, differ from Port or Lisbon; it is your vile taxes that make the expense; and, by the by, I must vent a monstrous oath against the duty upon foreign books. *Sixpence per pound weight* if bound; it is abominable!

Farewell, and God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Lisbon, March 28. 1801.

"The sight of your hand-writing did not give me much pleasure; 'twas the leg of a lark to a hungry man—yet it was your hand-writing. . . . . .

"I have been more than once tottering on the brink of a letter to you, and more than once the glimpse at some old Spaniard, or the whim of a walk, or an orange, or a bunch of grapes, has tempted me either to industry or idleness. I return rich in materials: a twelvemonth's work in England will produce a first volume of my History, and also of the Literary History. Of success I am not sanguine, though sufficiently so of desert; yet I shall leave a monument to my own memory, and perhaps, which is of more consequence, procure a few life-enjoyments.

"My poetising has been exclusively confined to the completion of Thalaba. I have planned a Hindoo romance of original extravagance, and have christened it 'The Curse of Keradoff;' but it were unwise to do anything here which were as well done in England; and indeed the easy business of hunting out everything to be seen has taken up no small portion of my time. I have ample materials for a volume of miscellaneous information; my work in England will be chiefly to arrange and tack together; here, I have been glutting, and go home to digest. In May we return; and, on my part, with much reluctance. I have formed local attachments and not personal ones:

this glorious river, with its mountain boundaries, this blessed winter sun, and the summer paradise of Cintra. I would gladly live and die here. My health is amended materially, but I have seizures enough to assure me that our own unkindly climate will blight me, as it does the myrtle and oranges of this better land; howbeit, business must lead me here once more for the after-volumes of the History. If your ill-health should also proceed from English skies, we may perhaps emigrate together at last. One head full of brains, and I should ask England nothing else.

"Meantime my nearer dreams lay their scenes about the Lakes.* Madoc compels me to visit Wales; perhaps we can meet you in the autumn: but for the unreasonable distance from Bristol and London, we might take up our abiding near you. I wish you were at Allfoxen†, —there was a house big enough: you would talk me into a healthy indolence, and I should spur you to profitable industry.

". . . . . .

. . . . . .

We are threatened with speedy invasion, and the critical hour of Portugal is probably arrived. No alarm has been so general; they have sent for transports to secure us a speedy retreat; nor is it impossible that all idlers may be requested to remove before the hurry and crowd of a general departure. Yet I doubt the reality of the danger. Portugal *buys respite;* will they kill the goose that lays golden eggs?

* Mr. Coleridge was at this time residing at Keswick.

† A house in Somersetshire, where Mr. Wordsworth resided at one time.

Will Spain consent to admit an army through that will shake her rotten throne? Will Bonaparte venture an army where there is danger of the yellow fever? to a part whence all plunder will be removed, where that army will find nothing to eat after a march of 1000 miles, through a starved country? On the other hand, this country may turn round, may join the coalition, seize on English property, and bid us all decamp; this was apprehended; and what dependence can be placed upon utter imbecility? Were it not for Edith, I would fairly see it out, and witness the whole boderation. There is a worse than the Bastile here, over whose dungeons I often walk . . . . . .

But this is not what is to be wished for Portugal,—this conquest which would excite good feelings against innovation; if there was peace, the business would probably be done at home. England is now the bedarkening power; she is in politics, what Spain was to religion at the Reformation. Change here involves the loss of their colonies; and an English fleet would cut off the supplies of Lisbon. . . . . The monastic orders will accelerate revolution, because the begging friars, mostly young, are mostly discontented, and the rich friars everywhere objects of envy. I have heard the people complain of monastic oppression, and distinguish between the friars and the religion they profess. I even fear, so generally is that distinction made, that popery may exist when monkery is abolished.

"In May I hope to be in Bristol; and if it can be so arranged, in September at the Lakes. I should

like to winter there; then I might labour at my History; and we might perhaps amuse ourselves with some joint journeyman work, which might keep up winter fires and Christmas tables. Of all this we will write on my return. I now long to be in England; as it is impossible to remain and root here at present. We shall soon and inevitably be expelled, unless a general peace redeem the merchants here from ruin. England has brought Portugal into the scrape, and with rather more than usual prudence, left her in it; it is understood that this country may make her own terms, and submit to France without incurring the resentment of England. When the Portuguese first entered this happy war, the phrase of their ministers was, that they were going to be pall-bearers at the funeral of France. Fools! they were digging a grave, and have fallen into it.

"Of all English doings I am quite ignorant. Thomas Dermody, I see, has risen again; and the Farmer's Boy is most miraculously overrated. The Monthly Magazine speaks with shallow-pated pertness of your Wallenstein; it interests me much; and what is better praise, invited me to a frequent perusal of its parts: will you think me wrong in preferring it to Schiller's other plays? it appears to me more dramatically true. Max may, perhaps, be overstrained, and the woman is like all German heroines; but in Wallenstein is that greatness and littleness united, which stamp the portrait. William Taylor, you see, is making quaint theories of the Old Testament writers; how are you employed? Must Lessing wait for the Resurrection before he receives a new life?

"So you dipped your young Pagan* in the Derwent, and baptized him in the name of the river! Should he be drowned there, he will get into the next edition of Wanley's Wonders, under the head of God's Judgments. And how comes on Moses, and will he remember me? God bless you!

Yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Mrs. Southey.

"Faro, April 17. 1801.

"By the luckiest opportunity, my dear Edith, I am enabled to write and ease myself of a load of uneasiness. An express is about to leave Faro, otherwise till Tuesday next there would have been no conveyance. We are at Mr. Lempriere's, hospitably and kindly received, and for the first time resting after ten days' very hard labour. At Cassillas our letter to Kirwan was of no use, as he was absent. For mules they asked too much, and we mounted burros to Azeetâo; there no supply was to be found, and the same beasts carried us to Setubal, which we did not reach till night. The house to which we had an introduction was deserted, and we lost nothing by going to an excellent estalagem. Next day it rained till noon, when we embarked, and sailed through dull and objectless shores to Alcacere: mules to Evora, the distance nine leagues; at the end

* The Rev. Derwent Coleridge, Principal of St. Mark's College Chelsea.

of the first it set in a severe rain, and the coldest north wind we ever experienced: the road was one infinite charreca, a wilderness of gum-cistus. We would have stopped anywhere; about six in the evening we begged charity at a peasant's house, at the Monte dos Moneros, three leagues short of Evora, dripping wet and deadly cold, dreading darkness, and the effects of so severe a wetting, and the cold wind; we got admittance, and all possible kindness; dried ourselves and baggage, which was wet also; supped upon the little round curd cheeses of the country, olives, and milk; and slept in comfort. The morning was fine, but the same wind continued till yesterday, and has plagued us cruelly by day and by night.

"At Evora we remained half a day; there our night sufferings began; from thence till we reached Faro we have never slept in one ceiled room; all tiled so loosely, that an astrologer would find them no bad observatories; and by no possible means could we keep ourselves warm. Waterhouse I taught, indeed, by Niebuhr's example in Arabia, to lie with his face under the sheets, but it suffocated me. From Evora we took burros to Beja,—a day and a half; we slept at Villa Ruina: from Viana to that little town is a lovely track of country, and, except that little island of cultivation, we have seen nothing but charrecas till we reached Tavira. The bishop gave us cheese and incomparable wine, and a letter to Father John of the Palm at Castro: to Castro a day's journey: on the road there was a monumental cross, where a man had been eat by the wolves. John

of the Palm is a very blackguard priest, but he was useful. We had a curious party there of his friends, drinking wine with us in the room, or rather between the four walls where we were pounded, not housed, for the night; a deputy judge, with a great sword, old as the Portuguese monarchy, smoking, and handing round his cigar out of his own mouth to the rest of the company; our muleteer, that was to be, hand and glove with the priest and the magistrate; and another pot companion. Next day across the field of Ourique, and seven long leagues of wilderness; there was no estalagem; in fact, we were in the wilds of Alentejo, where hardly any traveller has penetrated; we were again thrown on charity, and kindly received: this was Tuesday. On Wednesday we crossed the mountains to Tavira, seven leagues, —in the bishop's language, —long leagues, terrible leagues, — infinite leagues: the road would be utterly impassable were it not that the Host is carried on horseback in these wilds, and therefore the way must be kept open. As we passed one ugly spot, the guide told us a man broke his neck there lately. This day's journey, however, was quite new; wherever we looked was mountain,—waving, swelling, breasting, exactly like the sea-like prints of the Holy Land which you see in old Travels. At last the sea appeared, and the Guadiana, and the frontier towns Azamonte and Castro Marini; we descended, and entered the garden, the Paradise of Algarve here our troubles and labour were to end; we were out of the wilderness. Milk and honey, indeed, we did not expect in this land of promise, but we ex-

peeled every thing else. The sound of a drum alarmed us, and we found Tavira full of soldiers; the governor examined our pass, and I could not but smile at the way in which he eyed Roberto Southey, the negociente, of ordinary stature, thin and long face, a dark complexion, &c., and squinted at Waterhouse's lame legs. For a man in power he was civil, and sent us to the Corrigidor, to get our beasts secured; this second inspection over, we were in the streets of Tavira, to beg a night's lodging,—and beg hard we did for some hours; at last, induced by the muleteer, whom she knew, and by the petition of some dozen honest people, whom our situation had drawn about us, a woman, who had one room unoccupied by the soldiers, turned the key with doubt and delay, for her husband was absent, and we wanted nothing but a ceiling. Yesterday we reached Faro; and to-day remain here to rest. . . . . .

"Our faces are skinned by the cutting wind and sun: my nose has been roasted by a slow fire—burnt alive by sunbeams; 'tis a great comfort that Waterhouse has no reason to laugh at it; and even Bento's* is of a fine carbuncle colour. Thank God you were not with us; one room is the utmost these hovels contain; the walls of stone, unmortared, and the roofs what I have described them.

"Yet we are well repaid, and have never faltered either in health or spirits. At Evora, at Beja, at the Ourique field, was much to interest; and here we are in a lovely country, to us a little heaven.

* His servant.

. . . . . I have hurried over our way that you may know simply where we have been, and where we are; the full account would be a week's work. You will be amused with the adventures of two Irish, and one Scotch, officers, who came from Gibraltar to Lagos, with a fortnight's leave of absence, to amuse themselves; they brought a Genoese interpreter, and understood from him that it was eleven leagues to Faro, and a good *turnpike* road. I write their own unexaggerated account: — they determined to ride there to dinner, and they were three days on the way, begging, threatening, drawing their swords to get lodged at night,—all in vain; the first night they slept in the fields; afterwards they learnt a humbler tone, and got, between four of them, a shelter, but no beds; here they waited six weeks for an opportunity of getting back; and one of them was paymaster at Gibraltar; they were utterly miserable for want of something to do — billiards eternally — they even bought birds, a cat, a dog, a fox, for playthings; yesterday embarked, after spending a hundred pieces here in six weeks, neither they nor any one else knowing how, except that they gave six testoons apiece for all the Port wine in the place. . . . .

"God bless you! I have a thousand things to tell you on my return, my dear Edith.

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

CHAPTER VIII.

RETURN TO ENGLAND. — THINKS OF GOING DOWN TO CUMBERLAND. — LETTER FROM MR. COLERIDGE, DESCRIBING GRETA HALL. — THOUGHTS OF A CONSULSHIP. — THE LAW. — LYRICAL BALLADS. — CONSPIRACY OF GOWRIE. — MADOC. — DIFFICULTY OF MEETING THE EXPENSE OF THE JOURNEY TO KESWICK. — LETTER TO MR. BEDFORD. — UNCHANGED AFFECTION. — GOES DOWN TO KESWICK. — FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE LAKES. — EXCURSION INTO WALES. — APPOINTMENT AS PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MR. CORRY. — GOES TO DUBLIN. — LETTERS FROM THENCE. — GOES TO LONDON. — ACCOUNT OF HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES. — 1801.

In the course of the following June my father and mother returned to England, and for a short time again took up their residence at Bristol. His sojourn abroad had in all respects been a most satisfactory as well as a most enjoyable one: the various unpleasant and, indeed, alarming symptoms under which he had previously laboured, had proved to be rather of nervous than of organic origin; and as they seemed to have owed their rise to sedentary habits and continued mental exertion, they had readily given way, under the combined influence of change of scene and place, a more genial climate, and the healthful excitement of travel in a foreign land, and scenes full alike of beauty and of interest. He had not, indeed, been idle the while, for he had laid up large stores for his projected His-

tory of Portugal (never, alas! destined to be completed); and he had finished Thalaba, a transcript of which had been sent to England, and its publication negotiated for with the Messrs. Longman, by his friend Mr. Rickman. He had now entirely abandoned all idea of continuing the study of the law, and his thoughts and wishes were strongly turned towards obtaining some appointment, which would enable him to reside in a southern climate. In the mean time, having no especial reason for wishing to remain in Bristol, he had for some time contemplated a journey into Cumberland, for the double purpose of seeing the Lakes and visiting Mr. Coleridge, who was at this time residing at Greta Hall, Keswick; having been tempted into the north by the proximity of Mr. Wordsworth, and to whom he had written concerning this intention some months before leaving Lisbon. Mr. Coleridge's answer waited his return, and a portion of it may not unfitly be transcribed here, describing, as it does, briefly yet very faithfully, the place destined to be my father's abode for the longest portion of his life—the birth-place of all his children (save one), and the place of his final rest.

To Robert Southey, Esq.

"Greta Hall, Keswick; April 13. 1801.

"My dear Southey,

"I received your kind letter on the evening before last, and I trust that this will arrive at Bristol just in time to rejoice with them that rejoice. Alas! you will have found the dear old place sadly *minused* by

the removal of Davy. It is one of the evils of long silence, that when one recommences the correspondence, one has so much to say that one can say nothing. I have enough, with what I have seen, and with what I have done, and with what I have suffered, and with what I have heard, exclusive of all that I hope and all that I intend—I have enough to pass away a great deal of time with, were you on a desert isle, and I your *Friday*. But at present I purpose to speak only of myself relatively to Keswick and to you.

"Our house stands on a low hill, the whole front of which is one field and an enormous garden, nine-tenths of which is a nursery garden. Behind the house is an orchard, and a small wood on a steep slope, at the foot of which flows the river Greta, which winds round and catches the evening lights in the front of the house. In front we have a giant's camp—an encamped army of tent-like mountains, which by an inverted arch gives a view of another vale. On our right the lovely vale and the wedge-shaped lake of Bassenthwaite; and on our left Derwentwater and Lodore full in view, and the fantastic mountains of Borrodale. Behind us the massy Skiddaw, smooth, green, high, with two chasms and a tent-like ridge in the larger. A fairer scene you have not seen in all your wanderings. Without going from our own grounds we have all that can please a human being. As to books, my landlord, who dwells next door*, has a very respectable library, which he has put with mine; histories, encyclopædias,

* Greta Hall was at this time divided into two houses, which were afterwards thrown together.

and all the modern gentry. But then I can have, when I choose, free access to the princely library of Sir Guilfred Lawson, which contains the noblest collection of travels and natural history of, perhaps, any private library in England; besides this, there is the Cathedral library of Carlisle, from whence I can have any books sent to me that I wish; in short, I may truly say that I command all the libraries in the county. . . . . .

"Our neighbour is a truly good and affectionate man, a father to my children, and a friend to me. He was offered fifty guineas for the house in which we are to live, but he preferred me for a tenant at twenty-five; and yet the whole of his income does not exceed, I believe, 200*l.* a year. A more truly disinterested man I never met with; severely frugal, yet almost carelessly generous; and yet he got all his money as a common carrier*, by hard labour, and by pennies and pennies. He is one instance among many in this country of the salutary effect of the love of knowledge—he was from a boy a lover of learning. . . The house is full twice as large as we want; it hath more rooms in it than Allfoxen; you might have a bed-room, parlour, study, &c. &c., and there would always be rooms to spare for your or my visitors. In short, for situation and convenience,—and when I mention the name of Wordsworth, for society of men of intellect,—I know no place in which you and Edith would find yourselves so well suited."

The remainder of this letter, as well as another of

* This person, whose name was Jackson, was the "master" in Mr. Wordsworth's poem of "The Waggoner," the circumstances of which are accurately correct.

later date, was filled with a most gloomy account of his own health, to which my father refers in the commencement of his reply.

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Bristol, July 11. 1801.

"Yesterday I arrived, and found your letters; they did depress me, but I have since reasoned or dreamt myself into more cheerful anticipations. I have persuaded myself that your complaint is gouty; that good living is necessary, and a good climate. I also move to the south; at least so it appears: and if my present prospects ripen, we may yet live under one roof.

. . . . . .

"You may have seen a translation of Persius, by Drummond, an M.P. This man is going ambassador, first to Palermo and then to Constantinople: if a married man can go as his secretary, it is probable that I shall accompany him. I daily expect to know. It is a scheme of Wynn's to settle me in the south, and I am returned to look about me. My salary will be small — a very trifle; but after a few years I look on to something better, and have fixed my mind on a consulship. Now, if we go, you must join us as soon as we are housed, and it will be marvellous if we regret England. I shall have so little to do, that my time may be considered as wholly my own: our joint amusements will easily supply us with all expenses. So no more of the Azores; for we will see the Great

Turk, and visit Greece, and walk up the Pyramids, and ride camels in Arabia. I have dreamt of nothing else these five weeks. As yet every thing is so uncertain, for I have received no letter since we landed, that nothing can be said of our intermediate movements. If we are not embarked too soon, we will set off as early as possible for Cumberland, unless you should think, as we do, that Mahomet had better come to the mountain; that change of all externals may benefit you; and that bad as Bristol weather is, it is yet infinitely preferable to northern cold and damp. Meet we must, and will.

"You know your old Poems are a third time in the press; why not set forth a second volume? . . . . . Your Christabel, your Three Graces, which I remember as the very consummation of poetry. I must spur you to something, to the assertion of your supremacy; if you have not enough to muster, I will aid you in any way — manufacture skeletons that you may clothe with flesh, blood, and beauty; write my best, or what shall be bad enough to be popular; — we will even make plays *à-la-mode* Robespierre. . . . . Drop all task-work, it is ever unprofitable; the same time, and one twentieth part of the labour, would produce treble emolument. For Thalaba I received 115*l.*; it was just twelve months' *intermitting* work, and the after-editions are my own.

. . . . . .

"I feel here as a stranger; somewhat of Leonard's feeling. God bless Wordsworth for that poem!* What

* "The Brothers" is the title of this poem.

tie have I to England? My London friends? There, indeed, I have friends. But if you and yours were with me, eating dates in a garden at Constantinople, you might assert that we were in the best of all possible places; and I should answer, Amen: and if our wives rebelled, we would send for the chief of the black eunuchs, and sell them to the Seraglio. Then should Moses learn Arabic, and we would know whether there was anything in the language or not. We would drink Cyprus wine and Mocha coffee, and smoke more tranquilly than ever we did in the Ship in Small Street.

"Time and absence make strange work with our affections; but mine are ever returning to rest upon you. I have other and dear friends, but none with whom the whole of my being is intimate—with whom every thought and feeling can amalgamate. Oh! I have yet such dreams! Is it quite clear that you and I were not meant for some better star, and dropped, by mistake, into this world of pounds, shillings, and pence?

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"July 25.

"In about ten days we shall be ready to set forward for Keswick; where, if it were not for the rains, and the fogs, and the frosts, I should, probably,

be content to winter; but the climate deters me. It is uncertain when I may be sent abroad, or where, except that the south of Europe is my choice. The appointment hardly doubtful, and the probable destination Palermo or Naples. We will talk of the future, and dream of it, on the lake side. . . . . I may calculate upon the next six months at my own disposal; so we will climb Skiddaw this year, and scale Etna the next; and Sicilian air will keep us alive till Davy has found out the immortalising elixir, or till we are very well satisfied to do without it, and be immortalised after the manner of our fathers. My pocket-book contains more plans than will ever be filled up; but whatever becomes of those plans, this, at least, is feasible. . . . . .

Poor H——, he has literally killed himself by the law; which, I believe, kills more than any disease that takes its place in the bills of mortality. Blackstone is a needful book, and my Coke is a borrowed one; but I have one law book whereof to make an auto-da-fé; and burnt he shall be: but whether to perform that ceremony, with fitting libations, at home or fling him down the crater of Etna directly to the Devil, is worth considering at leisure.

"I must work at Keswick; the more willingly because with the hope, hereafter, the necessity will cease. My Portuguese materials must lie dead, and this embarrasses me. It is impossible to publish anything about that country now, because I must one day return there,—to their libraries and archives

otherwise I have excellent stuff for a little volume; and could soon set forth a first vol. of my History, either civil or literary. In these labours I have incurred a heavy and serious expense. I shall write to Hamilton, and review again, if he chooses to employ me. . . . . .

It was Cottle who told me that your Poems were reprint*ing* in a *third* edition: this cannot allude to the Lyrical Ballads, because of the number and the participle present. . . . . I am bitterly angry to see one new poem smuggled into the world in the Lyrical Ballads, where the 750 purchasers of the first can never get at it. At Falmouth I bought Thomas Dermody's Poems, for old acquaintance sake; alas! the boy wrote better than the man! . . . . . Pyes Alfred (to distinguish him from Alfred the pious*) I have not yet inspected; nor the wilful murder of Bonaparte, by Anna Matilda; nor the high treason committed by Sir James Bland Burgess, Baronet, against our lion-hearted Richard. Davy is fallen stark mad with a play, called the Conspiracy of Gowrie, which is by Rough; an imitation of Gebir, with some poetry; but miserably and hopelessly deficient in all else: every character reasoning, and metaphorising, and metaphysicking the reader most nauseously. By the by, there is a great analogy between hock, laver, pork pie, and the Lyrical Ballads,—all have a *flavour*, not beloved by those who require a *taste*, and utterly unpleasant to dram-drinkers, whose diseased palates can only *feel*

* This alludes to Mr. Cottle's "Alfred."

pepper and brandy. I know not whether Wordsworth will forgive the stimulant tale of Thalaba,—'tis a turtle soup, highly seasoned, but with a flavour of its own predominant. His are sparagrass (it ought to be spelt so) and artichokes, good with plain butter, and wholesome.

"I look on Madoc with hopeful displeasure; probably it must be corrected, and published now; this coming into the world at seven months is a bad way; with a Doctor Slop of a printer's devil standing ready for the forced birth, and frightening one into an abortion. . . . . .
Is there an emigrant at Keswick, who may make me talk and write French? And I must sit at my almost forgotten Italian, and read German with you; and we must read Tasso together. . . . . .

"God bless you!

Yours,
R. S."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Bristol, August 3. 1801.

"Following the advice of the Traumatic Poet*, I have been endeavouring to get money—and to get it

* The "Traumatic Poet" was a Bristol acquaintance of my father's and Mr. Coleridge, who somewhat overrated his own powers of poetical composition; two choice sonnets of his, on "Metaphor" and "Personification," were printed in the first volume of the Annual Anthology.

honestly. I wrote to ——, and propounded to him Madoc, to be ready for the press in six months, at a price equivalent to that of Thalaba, in proportion to its length; and I asked for fifty pounds *now*, the rest on *publication*. —— writes to beat down the price. . . . . And I have answered, that the difference about terms sets me at liberty from my proposal.

"And so, how to raise the wind for my long land voyage? Why, I expect Hamilton's account daily (for whom, by the by, I am again at work!), and he owes me I know not what; it may be fifteen pounds, it may be five-and-twenty: if the latter, off we go, as soon as we can get an agreeable companion in a post-chaise; if it be not enough, why I must beg, borrow, or steal. I have once been tempted to sell my soul to Stuart for three months, for thirteen guineas in advance; but my soul mutinied at the bargain . . . . . Madoc has had a miraculous escape! it went against my stomach and my conscience—but *malesuada fames*.

"Your West India plan is a vile one. Italy, Italy. I shall have enough leisure for a month's journey. Moses, and the young one with the heathenish name, will learn Italian as they are learning English,—an advantage not to be overlooked; society, too, is something; and Italy has never been without some great mind or other, worthy of its better ages. When we are well tired of Italy, why, I will get removed to Portugal, to which I look with longing eyes, as the land of promise. But, in all sober seriousness, the plan I

propose is very practicable, very pleasant, and eke also very *prudent*. My business will not be an hour in a week, and it will enable me to afford to be idle —a power which I shall never wish to exert, but which I do long to possess. . . . . Davy's removal to London extends his sphere of utility, and places him in affluence; yet he will be the worse for it. Chameleon like, we are all coloured by the near objects; and he is among metaphysical sensualists: he should have remained a few years longer here, till the wax cooled, which is now passive to any impression. I wish it was not true, but it unfortunately is, that experimental philosophy always deadens the feelings; and these men who 'botanise upon their mothers' graves,' may retort and say, that cherished feelings deaden our usefulness; and so we are all well in our way.

"... Do not hurry from the baths for the sake of meeting me; for when I set out is unpleasantly uncertain; and as I suppose we must be Lloyd's guests a few days, it may as well or better be before your return. My mother is very unwell, perhaps more seriously so than I allow myself to fully believe. If Peggy * were—what shall I say?—released is a varnishing phrase; and death is desirable, when recovery is impossible. I would bring my mother with me for the sake of total change, if Peggy could be left, but that is impossible; recover she cannot, yet may, and I believe will, suffer on till winter. Almost I pre-feel

* His cousin, Margaret Hill, to whom he was greatly attached, then dying in a consumption.

that my mother's illness will, at the same time, recall me.

The summer is going off, and I am longing for hot weather, to bathe in your lake; and yet am I tied by the leg. Howbeit, Hamilton's few days cannot be stretched much longer; and when his account comes I shall draw the money, and away. God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

A letter from Mr. Bedford, containing some reproaches for a much longer silence than was his wont, called forth the following reply:—

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"August 19. 1801.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"The tone and temper of your letter left me in an uncomfortable mood; — certainly I deserved it — as far as negligence deserves reproof so harsh; — but indeed, Grosvenor, you have been somewhat like the Scotch judge, who included all rape, robbery, murder, and horse-stealing under the head of sedition; so have you suspected negligence of cloaking a cold, and fickle, and insincere heart. Dear, dear Grosvenor, if by any magic of ear you could hear how often your name passes my lips! or could you see how often I see your figure in my walks — the recollections — and the wishes — but what are these? A hundred times should I have begun a letter if there had been enough to fill it, — if I could have sent you the

exquisite laugh when I again saw St. Augustine and his load, — or the smile when I read Saunders' death in the newspaper; — but these are unwriteable things — the gossip, and the playfulness, and the boyishness, and the happiness: — I was about to write, however, — in conscience and truth I was — and for an odd reason. I heard a gentleman imitate Henderson; and there was in that imitation a decisiveness of pronunciation, a rolling every syllable over the tongue, a force and pressure of lip and of palate, that had my eyes been shut I could have half believed you had been reading Shakspeare to me, — and I was about to tell you so, because the impression was so strong.

"With Drummond it seems I go not, but he and Wynn design to get for me — or try to get — a better berth; — that of Secretary to some Italian Legation, which is permanent, and not personally attached to the minister. Amen. I love the south, and the possibility highly pleases me, and the prospect of advancing my fortunes. To England I have no strong tie; the friends whom I love live so widely apart that I never see two in a place; and for acquaintance, they are to be found everywhere. Thus much for the future; for the present I am about to move to Coleridge, who is at the Lakes; — and I am labouring, somewhat blindly indeed, but all to some purpose, about my ways and means; for the foreign expedition that has restored my health, has at the same time picked my pocket; and if I had not good spirits and cheerful industry, I should be somewhat surly

and sad. So I am — I hope most truly and ardently for the last time — pen-and-inking for supplies, not from pure inclination. I am rather heaping bricks and mortar than building; hesitating between this plan and that plan, and preparing for both. I rather think it will end in a romance, in metre Thalabian, — in mythology Hindoo, — by name the Curse of Kehama, on which name you may speculate; and if you have any curiosity to see a crude outline, the undeveloped life-germ of the egg, say so, and you shall see the story as it is, and the poem as it is to be, written piece-meal.

"Thus, then, is my time employed, or thus it ought to be; for how much is dissipated by going here and there, — dinnering, and tea-taking, and suppering, drayings, or eveninging, take which phrase of fashion pleases you, — you may guess.

"Grosvenor, I perceive no change in myself, nor any symptoms of change; I differ only in years from what I was, and years make less difference in me than in most men. All things considered, I feel myself a fortunate and happy man; the future wears a better face than it has ever done, and I have no reason to regret that indifference to fortune which has marked the past. By the by, it is unfortunate that you cannot come to the sacrifice of one law book — my whole proper stock — whom I design to take up to the top of Mount Etna, for the express purpose of throwing him down straight to the devil. Huzza, Grosvenor! I was once afraid that I should have a deadly deal of law to forget whenever I had

done with it; but my brains, God bless them, never received any, and I am as ignorant as heart could wish. The tares would not grow.

"You will direct to Keswick, Cumberland. I set off on Saturday next, and shall be there about Tuesday; and if you could contrive to steal time for a visit to the Lakes, you would find me a rare guide.

"If you have not seen the second volume of Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads, I counsel you to buy them, and read *aloud* the poems entitled The Brothers, and Michael; which, especially the first, are, to my taste, excellent. I have never been so much affected, and so *well*, as by some passages there.

"God bless you. Edith's remembrance.

Yours as ever,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

My father's first impression of the Lake country was not quite equal to the feelings with which he afterwards regarded it; and he dreaded the climate, which, even when long residence had habituated him to it, he always considered as one of the greatest drawbacks to the north of England. "Whether we winter here or not," he writes immediately on his arrival at Keswick, "time must determine; inclination would lead me to, but it is as cold as at Yarmouth, and I am now growling at clouds and Cumberland weather. The Lakes at first disappointed me, — they were diminutive to what I expected, — the mountains little, compared to Mon-

chique: and for beauty, all English, perhaps all existing, scenery must yield to Cintra, my last summer's residence. Yet, as I become more familiar with these mountains, the more is their sublimity felt and understood: were they in a warmer climate, they would be the best and most desirable neighbours."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 6. 1801.

. . . . . .

. . . De Anthologiâ, which is of or concerning the Anthology. As I hope to be picking up lava from Etna, I cannot be tying up nosegays here in England; but blind Tobin, whom you know, — God bless him for a very good fellow! — but Tobin the blind is very unwilling that no more anthologies should appear; wherefore there will be more volumes, with which, all I shall have to do, will be to see that large-paper copies be printed to continue sets, — becoming myself only a gentleman contributor: to which ingenious publication I beg your countenance, sir, and support. . . . . .

You ask me questions about my future plans which I cannot readily answer, only that if I got a decent salary abroad, even should my health take a fancy to this queer climate, I have no estate to retire to at home, and so shall have a good prudential reason for remaining there. My dreams incline to Lisbon as a resting-place; I am really attached to the country,

and, odd as it may seem, to the people. In Lisbon they are, like all metropolitans, roguish enough, but in the country I have found them hospitable, even to kindness, when I was a stranger and in want. The consulship at Lisbon would, of all possible situations, best delight me,—better than a grand consulship,—'tis a good thousand a year. But when one is dreaming, you know, Grosvenor ——

"These lakes are like rivers; but oh for the Mondego and the Tagus! And these mountains beautifully indeed are they shaped and grouped; but oh for the great Monchique! and for Cintra, my paradise!—the heaven on earth of my hopes; and if ever I should have a house at Cintra, as in earnest sincerity I do hope I shall, will not you give me one twelvemonth, and eat grapes, and ride donkeys, and be very happy? In truth, Grosvenor, I have lived abroad too long to be contented in England: I miss southern luxuries,—the fruits, the wines; I miss the sun in heaven, having been upon a short allowance of sunbeams these last ten days; and if the nervous fluid be the galvanic fluid, and the galvanic fluid the electric fluid, and the electric fluid condensed light, zounds! what an effect must these vile dark rainy clouds have upon a poor nervous fellow whose brain has been in a state of high illumination for the last fifteen months!

"God bless you! I am going in a few days to meet Wynn at Liverpool, and then to see the Welsh lions. . . . . .

Grosvenor Bedford, I wish you would write a history for, take my word for it, no employment else is on

thousandth part so interesting. I wish you would try it. We want a Venetian history. I would hunt Italy for your materials, and help you in any imaginable way. Think about it, and tell me your thoughts.

Yours affectionately,
R. SOUTHEY."

On my father's arrival at Llangedwin, the residence of his friend Mr. C. W. W. Wynn, he found a letter awaiting him, offering him the appointment of private secretary to Mr. Corry, at that time Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland: the terms "prudently limited to one year, lest they should not suit each other;" the proffered salary 400*l.* Irish, (about 350*l.* English,) of which the half was specified as travelling expenses. This had been brought about through his friend Mr. Rickman, who was at that time secretary to Mr. Abbot, and, in consequence, residing in Dublin, — an additional inducement to my father to accept the appointment, as he would have to reside there himself during half the year.

His immediate services being required, after hurrying back for a few days to Keswick, he lost no time in taking possession of his new office.

To Mrs. Southey.

"Dublin, Wednesday, Oct. 14. 1801.

. . . . . .

"On Sunday, after delaying till the latest possible moment for the chance of passengers, we dropped down the river Dee. The wind almost immediately failed us; I never saw so dead a calm; there was not a heaving, a ripple, a wrinkle on the water; the ship, though she made some way with the tide, was as still as a house, to our feelings. Had the wind continued as when we embarked, eighteen hours would have blown us to Dublin. I saw the sun set behind Anglesea; and the mountains of Carnarvonshire rose so beautifully before us, that, though at sea, it was delightful. The sun-rise on Monday was magnificent. Holyhead was then in sight, and in sight on the wrong side it continued all day, while we tacked and retacked with a hard-hearted wind. We got into Beaumaris Bay, and waited there for the midnight tide: it was very quiet; even my stomach had not provocation enough, as yet, to be sick. In the night we proceeded: about two o'clock a very heavy gale arose; it blew great guns, as you would say; the vessel shipped water very fast, it came pouring down into the cabin, and both pumps were at work,—the dismallest thump, thump, I ever heard: this lasted about three hours. As soon as we were clear of the Race of Holyhead the sea grew smoother, though the gale continued. On Tuesday the morning was hazy, we could not see land, though it was not far distant;

and when at last we saw it, the wind had drifted us so far south that no possibility existed of our reaching Dublin that night. The captain, a good man and a good sailor, who never leaves his deck during the night, and drinks nothing but butter-milk, therefore readily agreed to land us at Balbriggen; and there we got ashore at two o'clock. Balbriggen is a fishing and bathing town, fifteen miles from Dublin,—but miles and money differ in Ireland from the English standard, eleven miles Irish being as long as fourteen English. . . . . .

"To my great satisfaction, we had in our company one of the most celebrated characters existing at this day; a man whose name is as widely known as that of any human being, except, perhaps, Bonaparte!

"He is not above five feet, but, notwithstanding his figure, soon became the most important personage of the party. 'Sir,' said he, as soon as he set foot in the vessel, 'I am a unique; I go anywhere, just as the whim takes me: this morning, sir, I had no idea whatever of going to Dublin; I did not think of it when I left home; my wife and family know nothing of the trip. I have only one shirt with me besides what I have on; my nephew here, sir, has not another shirt to his back: but money, sir, money,—anything may be had at Dublin.' Who the devil is this fellow? thought I. We talked of rum,—he had just bought 100 puncheons, the weakest drop 15 above proof: of the west of England,—out he pulls an Exeter newspaper from his pocket: of bank paper,—his pocket-book was stuffed with notes, Scotch, Irish, and English; and I really am obliged to him for some clues to dis-

cover forged paper. Talk, talk, everlasting;—he could draw for money on any town in the United Kingdoms; ay, or in America. At last he was made known for Dr. Solomon. At night I set upon the doctor, and turned the discourse upon disease in general, beginning with the Liverpool flux—which remedy had proved most effectual—nothing like the Cordial Balm of Gilead; at last I ventured to touch upon a tender subject—did he conceive Dr. Brodum's medicine to be at all analogous to his own? 'Not in the least, sir; colour, smell, all totally different: as for Dr. Brodum, sir,—all the world knows it—it is manifest to everybody—that his advertisements are all stolen, *verbatim et literatim*, from mine. Sir, I don't think it worth while to notice such a fellow.' But enough of Solomon, and his nephew and successor that is to be—the Rehoboam of Gilead—a cub in training.

"Mr. Corry is out of town for two days, so I have not seen him. The probability is, Rickman tells me, that I shall return in about ten days: you shall have the first intelligence; at present I know no more of my future plans than that I am to dine to-day with the secretary of the Lord Lieutenant, and to look me out a lodging first.

"But you must hear all I have seen of Ireland. The fifteen miles that we crossed are so destitute of trees, that I could only account for it by a sort of instinctive dread of the gallows in the natives. I find they have been cut down to make pikes. Cars, instead of carts or waggons; women without hats, shoes, or stockings. One little town we passed, once

famous,—its name Swords; it has the ruins of a castle and a church, with a round tower adjoining the steeple, making an odd group; it was notoriously a pot-walloping borough: and for breeding early ducks for the London market, the manufactory of ducks appeared to be in a flourishing state. Post-chaises very ugly, the doors fastening with a staple and chain; three persons going in one, paying more than two. The hotel here abominably filthy. I see mountains near Dublin most beautifully shaped, but the day is too hazy. You shall hear all I can tell you by my next. I am quite well, and, what is extraordinary, was never once sick the whole way. . . . . Edith, God bless you! I do not expect to be absent from you above a fortnight longer.

Yours affectionately,
R. SOUTHEY."

To Mrs. Southe--

"Dublin, Oct. 16. 1801.

"Dear Edith,

"In my last no direction was given. You will write under cover, and direct thus:—

Right Hon^ble
Isaac Corry,
&c. &c. &c.
Dublin.

This said personage I have not yet seen, whereby I am kept in a state of purportless idleness. He is

gone to his own country, playing truant from business among his friends. To-morrow his return is probable. I like his character; he does business well, and with method, but loves his amusement better than business, and prefers books better than official papers. It does not appear that my work will be any ways difficult,—copying and letter-writing, which any body could do, if any body could be confidentially trusted.

"John Rickman is a great man in Dublin and in the eyes of the world, but not one jot altered from the John Rickman of Christchurch, save only that, in compliance with an extorted promise, he has deprived himself of the pleasure of scratching his head, by putting powder in it. He has astonished the people about him. The government stationer hinted to him, when he was giving an order, that if he wanted anything in the pocket-book way, he might as well put it down in the order. Out he pulled his own—'Look, sir, I have bought one for two shillings.' His predecessor admonished him not to let himself down by speaking to any of the clerks. 'Why, sir,' said John Rickman, 'I should not let myself down if I spoke to every man between this and the bridge.' And so he goes on in his own right way. He has been obliged to mount up to the third story, before he could find a room small enough to sleep in; and there he led me, to show me his government bed, which, because it is a government bed, contains stuff enough to make a dozen; the curtains being completely double, and mattrass piled upon mattrass, so that tumbling out would be a

dangerous fall. About our quarters here, when we remove hither in June, he will look out. The filth of the houses is intolerable,—floors and furniture offending you with Portuguese nastiness; but it is a very fine city,—a magnificent city,—such public buildings, and the streets so wide! For these advantages Dublin is indebted to the prodigal corruption of its own government. Every member who asked money to make improvements got it; and if he got 20,000 pounds, in decency spent five for the public, and pocketed the rest. These gentlemen are now being hauled a little over the coals, and they have grace enough to thank God the Union did not take place sooner.

"The peace was not welcome to the patricians, it took away all their hopes of 'any fun' by the help of France. The government, acting well and wisely, control both parties,—the Orangemen and the United Irishmen,—and command respect from both; the old fatteners upon the corruption are silent in shame: the military, who must be kept up, will be well employed in making roads,—this measure is not yet announced to the public. It will be difficult to civilise this people. An Irishman builds him a turf stye, gets his fuel from the bogs, digs his patch of potatoes, and then lives upon them in idleness: like a true savage, he does not think it worth while to work that he may better himself. Potatoes and butter-milk,—on this they are born and bred; and whiskey sends them to the third heaven at once. If Davy had one of them in his laboratory, he could analyze his flesh, blood, and bones into nothing but potatoes, and but-

ter-milk, and whiskey; they are the primary elements of an Irishman. Their love of 'fun' eternally engages them in mischievous combinations, which are eternally baffled by their own blessed instinct of blundering. The United Irishmen must have obtained possession of Dublin but for a bull. On the night appointed, the mail-coach was to be stopped and burnt, about a mile from town, and that was the signal; the lamplighters were in the plot; and oh! to be sure! the honeys would not light a lamp in Dublin that evening, for fear the people should see what was going on. Of course alarm was taken, and all the mischief prevented. Modesty characterises them as much here as on the other side of the water. A man stopped Rickman yesterday,—'I'll be oblaged to you, sir, if you'll plaise to ask Mr. Abbot to give me a place of sixty or seventy pounds a year.' Favours, indeed, are asked here with as unblushing and obstinate a perseverance as in Portugal. This is the striking side of the picture—the dark colours that first strike a stranger; their good qualities you cannot so soon discover. Genius, indeed, immediately appears to characterise them; a love of saying good things—which 999 Englishmen in a thousand never dream of attempting in the course of their lives. When Lord Hardwicke came over, there fell a fine rain, the first after a long series of dry weather; a servant of Dr. Lindsay's heard an Irishman call to his comrade in the street—'Ho, Pat! and we shall have a riot,'—of course, a phrase to quicken an Englishman's hearing,—'this rain will breed a riot—the little potatoes will be pushing out the big ones.'

"Did I send, in my last, the noble bull that Rickman heard? He was late in company, when a gentleman looked at his watch, and cried, 'It is *to-morrow morning!*—I must wish you good *night*.'

"I have bought no books yet, for lack of money. To-day Rickman is engaged to dinner, and I am to seek for myself some ordinary or chop-house. This morning will clear off my letters; and I will make business a plea hereafter for writing fewer,—'tis a hideous waste of time. My love to Coleridge, &c., if, indeed, I do not write to him also.

"Edith, God bless you!

Yours affectionately
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Dublin, Oct. 16. 1801.

Dear Coleridge,

"The map of Ireland is a beautiful map—mountains, and lakes, and rivers; which I hope one day to visit with you. St. Patrick's Purgatory and the Giant's Causeway lie in the same corner. Where 'Mole, that mountain hoar,' is, I cannot find, though I have hunted the name in every distortion of possible orthography. A journey in Ireland has, also, the great advantage of enabling us to study savage life. I shall be able to get letters of introduction, which, as draughts for food and shelter in a country where whiskey-houses are scarce, will be invaluable.

This is in the distance: about the present, all I know has been just written to Edith; and the sum of it is, that I am all alone by myself in a great city.

"From Lamb's letter to Rickman I learn that he means to print his play, which is the lukewarm John*, whose plan is as obnoxious to Rickman as it was to you and me; and that he has been writing for the Albion, and now writes for the Morning Chronicle, where more than two thirds of his materials are superciliously rejected. Stuart would use him more kindly. Godwin, having had a second tragedy rejected, has filched a story from one of De Foe's novels for a third, and begged hints of Lamb. . . .

. . . . . .

Last evening we talked of Davy. Rickman also fears for him; something he thinks he has (and excusably, surely) been hurt by the attentions of the great: a worse fault is that vice of metaphysicians—that habit of translating right and wrong into a jargon which confounds them; which allows everything, and justifies everything. I am afraid, and it makes me very melancholy when I think of it, that Davy never will be to me the being that he has been. I have a trick of thinking too well of those I love, better than they generally deserve, and better than my cold and containing manners ever let them know: the foibles of a friend always endear him, if they have coexisted with my knowledge of him; but the pain is, to see beauty grow deformed—to trace disease from the first infection. These scientific men are

* The name of this play is "John Woodvil."

indeed, the victims of science; they sacrifice to it their own feelings, and virtues, and happiness.

"Odd and ill-suited moralisings, Coleridge, for a man who has left the lakes and the mountains to come to Dublin with Mr. Worldly Wisdom! But my moral education, thank God, is pretty well completed. The world and I are only about to be acquainted. I have outgrown the age for forming friendships. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

My father's presence seems only to have been required in Dublin for a very short time; and after rejoining my mother at Keswick, they went at once to London, Mr. Corry's duties requiring his residence there for the winter portion of the year. Here, when fairly established in his "scribe capacity," he appears to have experienced somewhat of the truth of the saying, "When thou doest well to thyself, men shall speak good of thee." "I have been a week in town," he writes to Mr. William Taylor, "and in that time have learnt something. The civilities which already have been shown me, discover how much I have been abhorred for all that is valuable in my nature; such civilities excite more contempt than anger, but they make me think more despicably of the world than I could wish to do. As if this were a baptism that purified me of all sins—a regeneration; and the one congratulates me, and the other visits me, as if the author of Joan of Arc and of

Thalaba were made a great man by scribing for the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"I suppose," he continues, "my situation, by all these symptoms, to be a good one;—for a more ambitious man, doubtless very desirable, though the ladder is longer than I design to climb. My principles and habits are happily enough settled; my objects in life are, leisure to do nothing but write, and competence to write at leisure; and my notions of competence do not exceed 300*l.* a year. Mr. Corry is a man of gentle and unassuming manners; fitter men for his purpose he doubtless might have found in some respects, none more so in regularity and despatch."* . . . . . .

These qualities, however, which my father might truly say he possessed in a high degree, were not called into much exercise by the duties of his secretaryship, which he thus humorously describes:—

To John Rickman, Esq.

"London, Nov. 20. 1801.

"The chancellor and the scribe go on in the same way. The scribe has made out a catalogue of all books published since the commencement of '97 upon finance and scarcity; he hath also copied a paper written by J. R., containing some Irish alderman's hints about oak bark; and nothing more hath the scribe done in his vocation. Duly he calls at the chancellor's door;

* Nov. 11. 1801.

sometimes he is admitted to immediate audience; sometimes kicketh his heels in the antechamber (once he kicked them for cold, but now there is a fire); sometimes a gracious message emancipates him for the day. Secrecy hath been enjoined him as to these state proceedings. On three subjects he is directed to read and research—corn-laws, finance, tythes, according to their written order. Alas! they are heathen Greek to the scribe! He hath, indeed, in days of old, read Adam Smith, and remembereth the general principle established; he presupposeth that about corn, as about everything else, the fewer laws the better: of finance he is even more ignorant: concerning the tythes, something knoweth he of the Levitical law, somewhat approveth he of a commutation for land, something suspecteth he why they are to be altered; gladly would the people buy off the burthen, gladly would the government receive the purchase money,—the scribe seeth objections thereunto. Meantime, sundry are the paragraphs that have been imprinted respecting the chancellor and the scribe; they have been compared (in defiance of the Butleraboo statute) to Empson and Dudley; and Peter Porcupine hath civilly expressed a hope that the poet will make no false *numbers* in his new work: sometimes the poet is called a Jacobin; at others it is said that his opinions are revolutionised: the chancellor asked him if he would enter a reply in that independent paper whose lying name is the True Briton, a paper over which the chancellor implied he had some influence; the poet replied 'No, that those flea-bites itched only if they were scratched:' the scribe hath been

courteously treated, and introduced to a Mr. Ormsby; and this is all he knoweth of the home politics.

. . . . . .

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Ευρηκα. Ευρηκα. Ευρηκα.

You remember your heretical proposition *de Cambro-Britannis*—that the Principality had never produced, and never could produce, a great man; that I opposed Owen Glendower and Sir Henry Morgan to the assertion in vain. But I have found the great man, and not merely the great man, but the *maximus homo*, the μεγιστος ἀνθρωπος, the μεγιστοτατος—we must create a super-superlative to reach the idea of his magnitude. I found him in the Strand, in a shop-window, laudably therein exhibited by a Cambro-Briton; the engraver represents him sitting in a room, that seems to be a cottage, or, at best, a farm, pen in hand, eyes uplifted, and underneath is inscribed—

'The Cambrian Shakespear.'

But woe is me for my ignorance! the motto that followed surpassed my skill in language, though it doubtless was a delectable morsel from that great Welshman's poems. You must, however, allow the justice of the name for him, for all his writings are in Welsh; and the Welshmen say that he is as great a man as Shakspeare, and they must know, because they can understand him. I inquired what might be the trivial name of this light and lustre of our dark age, but it hath escaped me; but that it meant, being

interpreted, either Thomas Denbigh, or some such every-day baptismal denomination. And now am I no prophet if you have not, before you have arrived thus far, uttered a three-worded sentence of malediction. . . . . .

To-day I dine with Lord Holland; Wynn is intimate with him, and my invitation is for the sake of Thalaba. The sale of Thalaba is slow—about 300 only gone.

. . . .

Yours truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

CHAPTER IX.

HIS MOTHER'S DEATH. — MELANCHOLY THOUGHTS. — RESIGNS HIS SECRETARYSHIP. — EDITION OF CHATTERTON'S WORKS. — THOUGHTS OF RESIDING AT RICHMOND, — AT KESWICK. — WELL-KNOWN PERSONS MET IN LONDON. — NEGOTIATES FOR A HOUSE IN WALES. — CHRONICLE OF THE CID. — REVIEW OF THALABA IN THE "EDINBURGH." — NEGOTIATION FOR HOUSE BROKEN OFF. — WANT OF MORE BOOKS. — ALARM OF WAR. — EDINBURGH REVIEW. — HAYLEYS LIFE OF COWPER. — RECOLLECTIONS OF BRIXTON. — EARLY DIFFICULTIES. — AMADIS OF GAUL. — THE ATLANTIC A GOOD LETTER CARRIER. — HOME POLITICS. — SCOTTISH BORDER BALLADS. — CUMBERLAND'S PLAYS. — PLAN FOR A BIBLIOTHECA BRITANNICA. — 1802, 1803.

So passed the close of the year. The commencement of a new one was saddened by his mother's last illness. She had joined them in London, and a few weeks only elapsed before very alarming symptoms appeared; the best advice availed not, she sank rapidly, and was released on the 5th of January, 1802, being in the fiftieth year of her age. My father was deeply affected at her death; for though in childhood he had experienced but little of her care and attention, having been so early, as it were, adopted by his aunt, he had had the happiness of adding much to her comfort and support during her later years. "In her whole illness," he writes to his brother Henry, "she displayed a calmness, a suppression of complaint,

a tenderness towards those around her, quite accordant with her whole life. It is a heavy loss. I did not know how severe the blow was till it came."*

The following letter communicates the tidings of her death to his friend Mr. Wynn; and, though presenting a painful picture, is yet one of those which let in so much light upon the character of the writer, that the reader will not wish it to have been withheld.

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Saturday, Jan. 9. 1802.

"My dear Wynn,

"You will not be surprised to learn that I have lost my mother. Early on Tuesday morning there came on that difficulty of breathing which betokened death: till then all had been easy; for the most part she had slept, and, when waking, underwent no pain but that wretched sense of utter weakness; but then there was the struggle and sound in the throat, and the deadly appearance of the eyes, that had lost all their tranquillity. She asked for laudanum; I dropt some, but with so unsteady a hand, that I knew not how much; she saw the colour of the water, and cried, with a stronger voice than I had heard during her illness, 'That's nothing, Robert! thirty drops — six and thirty!'

"It relieved her. She would not suffer me to

* Jan. 6. 1802.

remain by her bedside; that fearful kindness towards me had, throughout, distinguished her. 'Go down, my dear; I shall sleep presently!' She knew, and I knew, what that sleep would be. However, I bless God the last minutes were as easy as death can be; she breathed without effort, — breath after breath weaker, till all was over. I was not then in the room; but, going up to bring down Edith, I could not but look at her to see if she was indeed gone; it was against my wish and will, but I did look.

"We had been suffering for twelve hours, and the moment of her release was welcome: like one whose limb has just been amputated, he feels the immediate ceasing of acute suffering; — the pain of the wound soon begins, and the sense of the loss continues through life. I calmed and curbed myself, and forced myself to employment; but, at night, there was no sound of feet in her bedroom, to which I had been used to listen, and in the morning it was not my first business to see her. I had used to carry her her food, for I could persuade her better than any one else to the effort of swallowing it.

"Thank God, it is all over! Elmsley called on me and offered me money if I needed it; it was a kindness that I shall remember. Corry had paid me a second quarter, however.

"I have now lost all the friends of my infancy and childhood. The whole recollections of my first ten years are connected with the dead. There lives no one who can share them with me. It is losing so much of one's existence. I have not been yielding to, or rather indulging, grief; that would have been

folly. I have read, written, talked; Bedford has been often with me, and kindly.

"When I saw her after death, Wynn, the whole appearance was so much that of utter death, that the first feeling was as if there could have been no world for the dead; the feeling was very strong, and it required thought and reasoning to recover my former certainty, that as surely we must live hereafter, as all here is not the creation of folly or of chance.

God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The next few months passed by without the occurrence of any circumstance worthy of record; his official "duties," which appear to have been more nominal than real, being only varied by a short visit to Mr. William Taylor at Norwich. His spirits had not recovered the shock they received from his mother's death; and it was plain that, however easy and profitable was the appointment he held, if was not sufficiently suited to him to induce him long to retain it, although it afforded him a large share of time for his literary pursuits. Of the present course of these the following letter will give sufficient information: —

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"London, March 30. 1802.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"I had wondered at your silence, which Corry's servant made longer than it else had been, bringing me your letter only yesterday. . . . . The Southey Gazette is happily barren of intelligence, unless you will hear with interest that I yesterday bought the Scriptores Rerum Hispanicarum, after a long search — that the day before, my boots came home from the cobler's — that the gold leaf which Carlisle stuft into my tooth is all come out — and that I have torn my best pantaloons. So life is passing on, and the growth of my History satisfies me that it is not passing altogether unprofitably. One acquaintance drops in to-day, another to-morrow; the friends whom I have here look in often, and I have rather too much society than too little. Yet, I am not quite the comfortable man I should wish to be; the lamentable rambling to which I am doomed, for God knows how long, prevents my striking root any where, — and we are the better as well as the happier for local attachment. Now do I look round, and can fix upon no spot which I like better than another, except for its mere natural advantages. 'Tis a *res damnabilis*, Bedford, to have no family ties that one cares about. And so much for the Azure Fiends, whom I shall now take the liberty of turning out of the room. I am busy

at the Museum, copying unpublished poems of Chatterton, the which forthwith go to press. Soon I go with Edith to pass two or three days at Cheshunt; and, by the close of next month, I make my bow and away for my holydays to Bristol, that I may be as near Danvers and his mother as possible: my strongest family-like feeling seems to have grown there.

"I wish I were at Bath with you; 'twould do me good all over to have one walk over Combe Down. I have often walked there, before we were both upon the world. Oh! that I could catch Old Time, and give him warm water, and antimonial powder, and ipecacuanha, till he brought up again the last nine years! Not that I want them all; but I do wish there was a house at Bath wherein I had a home-feeling, and that it were possible ever again to feel as I have felt returning from school along the Bristol road. *Eheu fugaces, Posthume, Posthume!* The years may go; but I wish so many good things did not go with them, the pleasures, and the feelings, and the ties of youth. Blessings on the Moors, and the Spaniards, and the Portuguese, and the saints! I yet feel an active and lively interest in my pursuits. I have made some progress in what promises to be a good chapter about the Moorish period; and I have finished the first six reigns, and am now more than half way through a noble black letter chronicle of Alonso the XIth, to collate with the seventh. The Life of the Cid will be a fit frame for a picture of the manners of his time, and a curious picture it will be: putting all

that is important in my text, and all that is quaint in my notes, I shall make a good book.

"Ride, Grosvenor, and walk, and bathe, and drink water, and drink wine, and eat, and get well, and grow into good spirits, and write me a letter.

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

In this letter my father speaks of passing his holydays in Bristol. A very short time, however, only elapsed before he emancipated himself altogether from the trammels of his official duties. Mr. Corry, it seems, having little or no employment for him as secretary, wished him to undertake the tuition of his son; but as this was neither "in the bond," nor at all suited to my father's habits and inclinations, he resigned his appointment, losing thereby, to use his own words, "a foolish office and a good salary." I may add, however, that this circumstance only somewhat hastened his resignation, for a situation which was "all pay and no work" was by no means suited either to his taste or his conscience.

He now took up his abode once more in Bristol. "Here," he writes to Mr. Coleridge, "I have meantime a comfortable home, and books enough to employ as much time as I can find for them; my table is covered with folios, and my History advances steadily, and to my own mind well. No other employment pleases me half so much; nevertheless, to other employment I am compelled by the most cogent of all reasons. I have a job in hand for Longman and Rees, which will bring me in 60*l.*, a possibility of 40*l.*, and a chance of a farther 30*l.*;

this is an abridgement of Amadis of Gaul into three duodecimos, with an essay, — anonymously and secretly: if it sell, they will probably proceed through the whole library of romance. . . . . In poetry I have, of late, done very little, some fourscore lines the outside; still I feel myself strong enough to open a campaign, and this must probably be done to find beds, chairs, and tables for my house when I get one." *

But the various works here alluded to, are not the only ones upon which my father had been lately engaged. A native of Bristol himself, he had always taken a strong interest in Chatterton's writings and history, —

. . . . "The marvellous boy,
That sleepless soul that perish'd in his pride:" †

so much so, that the neglect of his relatives, who were in distressed circumstances, forms the subject of some indignant stanzas in one of his earliest unpublished poetical compositions; and, during his last residence in Bristol, his sympathies had been especially enlisted by Mr. Cottle in behalf of Mrs. Newton, Chatterton's sister.

Some time previously, Sir Herbert Croft had obtained possession from Mrs. Newton of all her brother's letters and MSS. under promise of speedily returning them; instead of which, some months afterwards, he incorporated and published them in a pamphlet entitled "Love and Madness." At the use

* July 25. 1802. Wordsworth.

thus surreptitiously made of her brother's writings, Mrs. Newton more than once remonstrated; but, beyond the sum of 10*l.*, she could obtain no redress. Mr. Cottle and my father now took the matter up, and the former wrote to Sir H. Croft, pointing out to him Mrs. Newton's reasonable claim, and urging him, by a timely concession, to prevent that publicity which otherwise would follow. He received no answer; and my father then determined to print by subscription all Chatterton's works, including those ascribed to Rowley, for the benefit of Mrs. Newton and her daughter. He accordingly sent proposals to the "Monthly Magazine," in which he detailed the whole case between Mrs. Newton and Sir Herbert Croft, and published their respective letters. The public sympathised rightly on the occasion, for a handsome subscription followed. Sir Herbert Croft was residing in Denmark at the time these proposals were published, and he replied to my father's statement by a pamphlet full of much personal abuse.

It was now arranged that a new edition of Chatterton's works should be jointly edited by Mr Cottle and my father; the former undertaking the consideration of the authenticity of Rowley, the latter the general arrangement of the work. It was published, in three vols. octavo, at the latter end of the present year (1802); and the editors had the satisfaction of paying over to Mrs. Newton and her daughter upwards of 300*l.*, a sum which was the means of rescuing them from great poverty in their latter days.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Kingsdown, July 25. 1802.

"Grosvenor, I do not like the accounts which reach me of your health. Elmsley says you look ill; your friend Smith tells me the same tale; and I know you are not going the way to amendment. Instead of that office and regular business, you ought to be in the country, with no other business than to amuse yourself: a longer stay at Bath would have benefited you; if the waters were really of use to you, you ought to give them a longer trial. * . .

. . . . . .

As for 'It can't be,' and 'I must be at the office,' and such-like phrases, when a man is seriously ill they mean nothing.*

"Tom is with me, and has been here about a fortnight, and kept me in as wholesome a state of idleness as I wish you to enjoy.

"Since the last semi-letter I wrote, my state affairs have been settled, and my unsecretaryfication completed, — a good sinecure gone; but, instead of thinking the loss unlucky, I only think how lucky it was I ever had it. A light heart and a thin pair of breeches, — you know the song; and it applies, for, breeches being the generic name, pantaloons are included in all their modifications, and I sit at the

* "Have you time to die, sir?" was the home question of a London physician to a patient, a lawyer in full practice, who was making similar excuses for not taking his prescription of rest and freedom from anxious thought; and it admitted but of one reply.

present writing in a pair of loose jean trowsers without lining.

"So many virtues were discovered in me when I was Mr. Secretary, that I suppose nothing short of sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, will be found possible reasons for my loss of office. The old devil will be said to have entered, having taken with him seven other evil spirits, and the last state of that man (meaning me) will be worse than the first.

"But I hope I am coming to live near London: not in its filth; if John May can find me a good snug house about Richmond, there I will go, and write my History, and work away merrily; and I will drink wine when I can afford it, and when I cannot, strong beer shall be the nectar — nothing like stingo! and if that were to fail too, laudanum is cheap; the Turks have found that out; and while there are poppies, no man need go to bed sober for want of his most gracious Majesty's picture. And there will be a spare bed at my Domus, — mark you that, Grosvenor Bedford! and Tom's cot into the bargain; and, from June till October, always a cold pie in the cupboard; and I have already got a kitten and a dog in remainder, — but that is a contingency; and you know there is the contingency of another house-animal, whom I already feel disposed to call whelp and dog, and all those vocables of vituperation by which a man loves to call those he loves best.

"Eblis's angels sometimes go up to peep at the table of fate, and then get knocked on the head with stars, as we see; only foolish people such as we are mistake them for shooting stars. I should like one

look at the table, just to see what will happen before the end of the year, — not to the world in general, nor to Europe, nor to Napoleon, nor to King George, but to the centre to which these great men and these great things are very remote radii, — to my own microcosm; — hang the impudence of that mock-modesty phrase! — 'tis a megalocosm, and a megistocosm, and a megistatocosm too to me; and I care more about it than about all the old universe, with Mr. Herschell's new little planets to boot.

Vale, vale, mi sodales.

R. S."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Bristol, Aug. 4. 1802.

"In reply to your letter there are so many things to be said that I know not where to begin. First and foremost, then, about Keswick, and the pros and cons for domesticating there. To live cheap, — to save the crushing expense of furnishing a house; — sound, good, mercantile motives! Then come the ghosts of old Skiddaw and Great Robinson; — the whole eye-wantonness of lakes and mountains, — and a host of other feelings, which eight years have modified and moulded, but which have rooted like oaks, the stronger for their shaking. But then your horrid latitude! and incessant rains! . . . . . and I myself one of your greenhouse plants, pining for want of sun. For Edith, her mind's eyes are

squinting about it; she wants to go, and she is afraid for my health. . . . . .

Some time hence I must return to Portugal, to complete and correct my materials and outlines: whenever that may be, there will be a hindrance and a loss in disposing of furniture, supposing I had it. Now, I am supposing that this I should find at Keswick, and this preponderance would fall like a ton weight in the scale.

. . . . . .

As to your Essays, &c. &c., you spawn plans like a herring; I only wish as many of the seed were to vivify in proportion. . . . . .

. . . . . .

Your Essays on Contemporaries I am not much afraid of the imprudence of, because I have no expectation that they will ever be written; but if you were to write, the scheme projected upon the old poets would be a better scheme, because more certain of sale, and in the execution nothing invidious. Besides, your sentence would fall with greater weight upon the dead: however impartial you may be, those who do *not* read your books will think your opinion the result of your personal attachments, and that very belief will prevent numbers from reading it. Again, there are some of these living poets to whom you could not fail of giving serious pain; Hayley, in particular, — and everything about that man is good except his poetry. Bloomfield I saw in London, and an interesting man he is — even more than you would expect. I have reviewed his Poems with the express object of serving him; because if his fame keeps up

to another volume, he will have made money enough to support him comfortably in the country: but in a work of criticism how could you bring him to the touchstone? and to lessen his reputation is to mar his fortune.

"We shall probably agree altogether some day upon Wordsworth's Lyrical Poems. Does he not associate more feeling with particular phrases, and you also with him, than those phrases can convey to any one else? This I suspect. Who would part with a ring of a dead friend's hair? and yet a jeweller will give for it only the value of the gold: and so must words pass for their current value.

. . . . . .

"I saw a number of notorious people after you left London. Mrs. Inchbald, — an odd woman, but I like her. Campbell . . . . who spoke of old Scotch ballads with contempt! Fuseli . . . . . Flaxman, whose touch is better than his feeling. Bowles . . . . Walter Whiter, who wanted to convert me to believe in Rowley. Perkins, the Tractorist*, a demure-looking rogue. Dr. Busby, — oh! what a Dr. Busby! — the great musician! the greater than Handel! who is to be the husband of St. Cecilia in his seraph state, ... and he set at me with a dead compliment! Lastly, Barry, the painter: poor fellow! he is too mad and too miserable to laugh at.

. . . . . .

"Heber sent certain volumes of Thomas Aquinas to your London lodgings, where peradventure they

* This alludes to Perkins's magnetic Tractors

still remain. I have one volume of the old Jockey, containing quaint things about angels; and one of Scotus Erigena; but if there be any pearls in those dunghills, you must be the cock to scratch them out, — that is not my dunghill. What think you of thirteen folios of Franciscan history? I am grown a great Jesuitophilist, and begin to think that they were the most enlightened personages that ever condescended to look after this 'little snug farm of the earth.' Loyola himself was a mere friar . . . . but the missionaries were made of admirable stuff. There are some important questions arising out of this subject. The Jesuits have not only succeeded in preaching Christianity where our Methodists, &c., fail, but where all the other orders of their own church have failed also; they had the same success everywhere, in Japan as in Brazil. . . . . My love to Sara, if so it must be . . . . however, as it is the casting out of a Spiritus Asper — which is an evil spirit — for the omen's sake, Amen! Tell me some more, as Moses says, about Keswick, for I am in a humour to be persuaded,—and if I may, keep a jackass there for Edith! I have a wolfskin great-coat, so hot, that it is impossible to wear it here. Now, is not that a reason for going where it may be useful?

Vale.

R. S."

The following month, September, was marked by the birth of his first child, a daughter, named after her paternal grandmother, Margaret; and, ardently

as he had always wished for children, the blessing was most joyfully and thankfully welcomed. But the hopes thus raised were doomed in this case to be soon blasted.

My father was now becoming weary of being a wanderer upon the face of the earth, and having now a nursery as well as a library to remove, a permanent residence was becoming almost a matter of necessity. His thoughts, as we have seen, had at one time turned towards settling at Richmond, and latterly more strongly towards Cumberland: but for a while he gave up this scheme, attracted by the greater conveniences of Wales; and he now entered into treaty for a house in Glamorganshire, in the Vale of Neath, "one of the loveliest spots," he thought it, in Great Britain. "There," he says, "I mean to remain and work steadily at my History till it be necessary for me to go to Portugal, to correct what I shall have done, and hunt out new materials. This will be two years hence; and if the place answer my wishes, I shall not forsake it then, but return there as to a permanent residence. One of the motives for fixing there is the facility afforded of acquiring the Welsh language." *

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Nov. 28. 1802.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"I thought you would know from Wynn that I trespass on my eyes only for short letters; or from

* To William Taylor, Esq., Nov. 21. 1802.

Rickman, to whom my friend Danvers will have carried the latest news of me this day, if those unhappy eyes had been well you would ere this have received Kehama. They have been better, and are again worse, in spite of *lapis calaminaris*, goulard, cayenne pepper, and the surgeon's lance; but they will soon be well, so I believe and trust. You have seen my Cid, and have not seen what I wrote to Wynn about its manner. Everywhere possible the story is told in the very phrase of the original chronicles, which are almost the oldest works in the Castilian language. The language, in itself poetical, becomes more poetical by necessary compression; if it smack of romance, so does the story: in the notes, the certain will be distinguished from the doubtful passages quoted, and references to author and page uniformly given. Thus much of this, which is no specimen of my historical style: indeed, I do not think uniformity of style desirable; it should rise and fall with the subject, and adapt itself to the matter. Moreover, in my own judgment, a little peculiarity of style is desirable, because it nails down the matter to the memory. You remember the facts of Livy; but you remember the very phrases of Tacitus and Sallust, and the phrase reminds you of the matter when it would else have been forgotten. This may be pushed, like every thing, too far, and become ridiculous; but the principle is true.

"As a different specimen, I wish you could see a life of St. Francisco, a section upon Mohammedanism, and a chapter upon the Moorish period. Oh, these eyes! these eyes! to have my brain in labour,

and this spell to prevent delivery like a cross-legged Juno! Farewell till to-morrow; I must sleep, and *laze*, and play whist, till bedtime.

"..... Snakes have been pets in England; is it not Cowley who has a poem upon one? —

> 'Take heed, fair Eve, you do not make
> Another tempter of the snake.'

They *ought* to be tamed and taken into our service, for snakes eat mice and can get into their holes after them; and, in our country, the venomous species is so rare, that we should think them beautiful animals were it not for the recollection of the Old Serpent. *When* I am housed and *homed* (as I shall be, or hope to be, in the next spring; not that the negotiation is over yet, but I expect it will end well, and that I shall have a house in the loveliest part of South Wales, in a vale between high mountains; and an onymous house too, Grosvenor, and one that is down in the map of Glamorganshire, and its name is Maes Gwyn; and so much for that, and there's an end of my parenthesis), *then* do I purpose to enter into a grand confederacy with certain of the animal world: every body has a dog, and most people have a cat; but I will have, moreover, an otter, and teach him to fish, for there is salmon in the river Neath (and I should like a hawk, but that is only a vain hope, and a gull or an osprey to fish in the sea), and I will have a snake if Edith will let me, and I will have a toad to catch flies, and it shall be made murder to kill a spider in my domains: then

Grosvenor, when you come to visit me, — N.B., you will arrive per mail between five and six in the morning at Neath; *ergo*, you will find me at breakfast about seven, — you will see puss on the one side, and the otter on the other, both looking for bread and milk, and Margery in her little great chair, and the toad upon the tea-table, and the snake twisting up the leg of the table to look for his share. These two pages make a letter of decent length from such a poor blind Cupid as

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq. M.P.

"Dec. 22. 1802.

"*Vidi* the Review of Edinburgh. The first part is designed evidently as an answer to Wordsworth's Preface to the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads; and, however relevant to me, *quoad* Robert Southey, is certainly utterly irrelevant to Thalaba. In their account of the story they make some blunders of negligence: they ask how Thalaba knew that he was to be the Destroyer, forgetting that the Spirit told him so in the text; they say that the inscription of the locust's forehead teaches him to read the ring, which is not the case; and that Mohareb tries to kill him at last, though his own life would be destroyed at the same time, — without noticing that that very 'though' enters into the passage, and the reason why is given. I added all the notes for the cause

which they suspect: they would have accused me of plagiarism where they could have remembered the original hint; but they affirm that all is thus borrowed,—without examining, when all that belongs to another is subtracted, what quantity of capital remains. This is dishonest, for there is no hint to be found elsewhere for the best parts of the poem, and the most striking incidents of the story.

"The general question concerning my system and taste is one point at issue; the metre, another. These gentlemen who say that the metre of the Greek choruses is difficult to understand at a first reading, have, perhaps, made it out at last, else I should plead the choruses as precedent, and the odes of Stolberg in German, and the Ossian of Cesarotti in Italian; but this has been done in the M. Magazine's review of Thalaba. For the question of taste, I shall enter into it when I preface Madoc. I believe we are both classics in our taste; but mine is of the Greek, theirs of the Latin school. I am for the plainness of Hesiod and Homer, they for the richness and ornaments of Virgil. They want periwigs placed upon bald ideas, a narrative poem must have its connecting parts; it cannot be all interest and incident, no more than a picture all light, a tragedy all pathos. . . . . The review altogether is a good one, and will be better than any London one, because London reviewers always know something of the authors who appear before them, and this inevitably affects the judgment. I, myself, get the worthless poems of some good-natured person whom I know; I am aware of what review-

phrases go for, and contrive to give that person no pain, and deal out such milk-and-water praise as will do no harm: to speak of smooth versification and moral tendency, &c. &c., will take in some to buy the book, while it serves as an emollient mixture for the patient. I have rarely scratched without giving a plaister for it; except, indeed, where a fellow puts a string of titles to his name, or such an offender as —— appears, and then my inquisitorship, instead of actually burning him, only ties a few crackers to his tail.

"But when any Scotchman's book shall come to be reviewed, then see what the Edinburgh critics will say. . . . . Their philosophy appears in their belief in Hindoo chronology! and when they abuse Parr's style, it is rather a knock at the dead lion, old Johnson. A first number has great advantages; the reviewers say their say upon all subjects, and lay down the law: that contains the Institutes; by and by they can only comment.

God bless you!

R. S."

In the meantime my father's pleasant anticipations of living in Wales were suddenly all frustrated; for, just as the treaty was on the point of being concluded, it occurred to him that some small additions were wanting in the kitchen department, and this request the landlord so stoutly resisted, that the negotiation was altogether broken off in consequence.

Upon this slight occurrence, he used to say, hinged many of the outward circumstances of his future life; and, much and deeply as he afterwards became attached to the lakes and mountains of Cumberland, he would often speak with something like regret of Maes Gwyn and the Vale of Neath.

Meanwhile his literary labours were proceeding much in their usual course, notwithstanding the complaint in his eyes. "I am reviewing for Longman," he says at this time; "reviewing for Hamilton; translating, perhaps about again to versify for the Morning Post: drudge — drudge — drudge. Do you know Quarles's emblem of the soul that tries to fly, but is chained by the leg to earth? For myself I could do easily, but not easily for others, and there are more claims than one upon me."*

From some cause or other, his correspondence seems somewhat to have diminished at this time; the few letters, however, that I am able to select relating to this period are not devoid of interest.

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Jan. 30. 1803.

"My dear Rickman,

"* * * * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * * *

I am rich in books, considered as plain and poor Robert Southey, and in foreign books considered as

* To William Taylor, Esq., January 23. 1803.

an Englishman; but, for my glutton appetite and healthy digestion, my stock is but small, and the historian feels daily and hourly the want of materials. I believe I must visit London for the sake of the Museum, but not till the spring be far advanced, and warm enough to write with tolerable comfort in their reading-room. My History of Monachism cannot be complete without the Benedictine History of Mabillon. There is another book in the Museum, which must be noticed literally, or put in a note, — the Book of the Conformities of St Francis and Jesus Christ! I have thirteen folios of Franciscan history in the house, and yet want the main one, Wadding's Seraphic Annual, which contains the original bulls.

"Of the Beguines I have, as yet, found neither traces nor tidings, except that I have seen the name certainly among the heretic list; but my monastic knowledge is very far from complete. I know only the outline for the two centuries between Francisco and Luther, and nothing but Jesuit history from that period.

"Do not suspect me of querulousness; labour is my amusement, and nothing makes me growl, but that the kind of labour cannot be wholly my own choice; — that I must lay aside old chronicles, and review modern poems; instead of composing from a full head, that I must write like a school-boy upon some idle theme on which nothing can be said or ought to be said. I believe the best thing will be as you hope, for, if I live and do well, my History shall be done, and that will be a fortune to a man

economical from habit, and moderate in his wants and wishes from feeling and principle.

"Coleridge is with me at present; he talks of going abroad, for, poor fellow, he suffers terribly from this climate. You bid me come with the swallows to London! I wish I could go with the swallows in their winterly migration,

. . .

Yours affectionately,

R. S."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Bristol, March 14. 1803.

"Dear Coleridge,

"It is nearly a week now since Danvers and I returned from Rownham; and now the burthen will soon fall off my shoulders, and I shall feel as light as old Christian when he had passed the directing post: forty guineas' worth of reviewing has been hard work.

. . . . . .

The very unexpected and extraordinary alarm brought by yesterday's papers may, in some degree, affect my movements, for it has made Tom write to offer his services; and if the country arm, of course he will be employed. But *quid Diabolus* is all this about? Stuart writes well upon the subject, yet I think he overlooks some circumstances in Bonaparte's conduct, which justify some delay in yielding Alexandria and Malta: that report of Sebastiani's was almost a declaration that France would take Egypt

as soon as we left it. You were a clearer-sighted politician than I. If war there must be, the St. Domingo business will have been the cause, though not the pretext, and that rascal will set the poor negroes cutting English throats instead of French ones. It is true, country is of less consequence than colour there, and these black gentlemen cannot be very wrong if the throat be a white one; but it would be vexatious if the followers of Toussaint should be made the tools of Bonaparte.

"Meantime, what becomes of your scheme of travelling? If France goes to war, Spain must do the same, even if the loss of Trinidad did not make them inclined to it. You must not think of the Western Islands or the Canaries; they are prisons from whence it is very difficult to escape, and where you would be cut off from all regular intercourse with England: besides, the Canaries will be hostile ports. In the West Indies you ought not to trust your complexion. When the tower of Siloam fell, it did not give all honest people warning to stand from under. How is the climate of Hungary? Your German would carry you there, and help you there till you learnt a Sclavonic language; and you might take home a profitable account of a country and a people little known. If it should be too cold a winter residence, you might pass the summer there, and reach Constantinople or the better parts of Asia Minor in the winter. This looks like a tempting scheme on paper, and will be more tempting if you look at the map; but, for all such schemes, a companion is almost necessary.

"The Edinburgh Review will not keep its ground. It consists of pamphlets instead of critical accounts. There is the quantity of a three-shilling pamphlet in one article upon the Balance of Power, in which the brimstone-fingered son of oatmeal says that wars now are carried on by *the sacrifice of a few useless millions and more useless lives*, and by a few sailors fighting *harmlessly* upon the barren ocean: these are his very words. . . . . He thinks there can be no harm done unless an army were to come and eat up all the sheep's trotters in Edinburgh. If they buy many books at Gunville *, let them buy the English metrical romances published by Ritson; it is, indeed, a treasure of true old poetry: the expense of publication is defrayed by Ellis. Ritson is the oddest, but most honest, of all our antiquarians, and he abuses Percy and Pinkerton with less mercy than justice. With somewhat more modesty than Mister Pinkerton, as he calls him, he has mended the spelling of our language, and, without the authority of an act of parliament, changed the name of the very country he lives in into Engleland. The beauty of the common stanza will surprise you.

"Cowper's Life is the most pick-pocket work, for its shape and price, and author and publisher, that ever appeared. It relates very little of the man himself. This sort of delicacy seems quite groundless towards a man who has left no relations or connections who could be hurt by the most explicit biographical detail. His letters are not what one does expect, and yet what one

* The seat of Mr. Wedgewood.

ought to expect, for Cowper was not a strong-minded man even in his best moments. The very few opinions that he gave upon authors are quite ludicrous; he calls Mr. Park

. . . . 'that comical spark,
Who wrote to ask me for a Joan of Arc.'

'One of our best hands' in poetry. Poor wretched man! the Methodists among whom he lived made him ten times madder than he could else have been. . . . . .

God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Bristol, April 3. 1803.

"I have been thinking of Brixton, Grosvenor, for these many days past, when more painful thoughts would give me leave. An old lady, whom I loved greatly, and have for the last eight years regarded with something like a filial veneration, has been carried off by this influenza. She was mother to Danvers, with whom I have so long been on terms of the closest intimacy. . . . . Your ejection from Brixton has very long been in my head as one of the evil things to happen in 1803, though it was not predicted in Moore's Almanack. However, I am glad to hear you have got a house; . . . . . and still more, that it is an old house,

I love old houses best, for the sake of the odd closets and cupboards, and good thick walls that don't let the wind blow in, and little out-of-the-way polyangular rooms with great beams running across the ceiling,—old heart of oak, that has outlasted half a score generations; and chimney pieces with the date of the year carved above them, and huge fire-places that warmed the shins of Englishmen before the house of Hanover came over. The most delightful associations that ever made me feel, and think, and fall a-dreaming, are excited by old buildings—not absolute ruins, but in a state of decline. Even the clipt yews interest me; and if I found one in any garden that should become mine, in the shape of a peacock, I should be as proud to keep his tail well spread as the man who first carved him. In truth, I am more disposed to connect myself by sympathy with the ages which are past, and by hope with those that are to come, than to vex and irritate myself by any lively interest about the existing generation.

"Your letter was unusually interesting, and dwells upon my mind. I could, and perhaps will some day write an eclogue upon leaving an old place of residence. What you say of yourself impresses upon me still more deeply the conviction, that the want of a favourite pursuit is your greatest source of discomfort and discontent. It is the pleasure of *pursuit* that makes every man happy; whether the merchant, or the sportsman, or the collector, the philobibl, or the *reader-o-bibl*, and *maker-o-bibl*, like me,—pursuit at once supplies employment and hope. This is what I have often preached to you, but perhaps I never told

you what benefit I myself have derived from resolute employment. When Joan of Arc was in the press, I had as many legitimate causes for unhappiness as any man need have,—uncertainty for the future, and immediate want, in the literal and plain meaning of the word. I often walked the streets at dinner time for want of a dinner, when I had not eighteen-pence for the ordinary, nor bread and cheese at my lodgings. But do not suppose that I thought of my dinner when I was walking—my head was full of what I was composing: when I lay down at night I was planning my poem; and when I rose up in the morning the poem was the first thought to which I was awake. The scanty profits of that poem I was then anticipating in my lodging-house bills for tea, bread and butter, and those little &cs. which amount to a formidable sum when a man has no resources; but that poem, faulty as it is, has given me a Baxter's shove into my right place in the world.

"So much for the practical effects of Epictetus, to whom I hold myself indebted for much amendment of character. Now,—when I am not comparatively, but positively, a happy man, wishing little, and wanting nothing,—my delight is the certainty that, while I have health and eyesight, I can never want a pursuit to interest. Subject after subject is chalked out. In hand I have Kehama, Madoc, and a voluminous history; and I have planned more poems and more histories; so that whenever I am removed to another state of existence, there will be some *valde lacrymabile hiatus* in some of my posthumous works.

"We have all been ill with La Gripe. But the

death of my excellent old friend is a real grief, and one that will long be felt: the pain of amputation is nothing,—it is the loss of the limb that is the evil. She influenced my every-day thought, and one of my pleasures was to afford her any of the little amusements, which age and infirmities can enjoy. . .

. . . . . .

When do I go to London? If I can avoid it, not so soon as I had thought. The journey, and some unavoidable weariness in tramping over that overgrown metropolis, half terrifies me;—and then the thought of certain pleasures, such as seeing Rickman, and Duppa, and Wynn, and Grosvenor Bedford, and going to the old book-shops, half tempts me. I am working very hard to fetch up my lee-way; that is, I am making up for time lost during my ophthalmia. Fifty-four more pages of Amadis, and a preface—no more to do—huzza! land! land!

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Bristol, April 22. 1803.

"My dear Tom,

"Huzza! huzza! huzza! The bottle is a good post, and the Atlantic delivers letters according to direction.

"Yours of May 23. 1802 . . Lat. 33 . 46 N.
Lon. 64 . 27 W.
was found by Messrs. Calmer and Seymour, of St. Salvador's, Dec. 18. 1802, on the N.W. of that island,
Lat. 23 . 30 N.
Lon. 73 . 30 W.
very civilly enclosed by some Mr. Aley Pratt, Feb. 10, sent per Betsey Cains, Capt. Wilmott, and has this day reached me from Ramsgate, to my very great surprise and satisfaction. You had sealed it so clumsily, that some of the writing was torn, and the salt water had got at it, so that the letter is in a ruinous state; but it shall be preserved as the greatest curiosity in my collection. I shall send the account to Stuart.

"I did heartily regret that you were not here; we would have drawn a cork in honour of Messrs. Calmer and Seymour, and Aley Pratt, who, by keeping the letter two months, really seem to have been sensible that the letter was of value. When I consider the quadrillion of chances against such a circumstance, it seems like a dream,—the middle of the Atlantic, thrown in there! cast on a corner of St. Salvador's, and now here, at No. 12. St. James's Place, Kingsdown, Bristol; hunting me through the ocean to the Bahamas, and then to this very individual spot. Oh, that the bottle had kept a log-book! If the Bottle-conjurer had been in it, now!

"I think this letter decisive of a current; chance winds would never have carried it 600 miles in less than seven months: and, if I recollect right, by theory there ought to be a current in that direction. Supposing the bottle to have been found the very day it

landed, it must have sailed at the rate of three knots in a day and night; it was picked up 209 days after the post set off. More letters should be thrown overboard about the same latitude; and then, when we have charts of all the currents, some dozen centuries hence, that particular one shall be called Southey's Current. . . . . .

The news is all pacific, and I fully expect you will be paid off ere long. All goes on as usual here. Margaret screams as loud as the parrot, that talent she inherited. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

'Bristol, May 30. 1803.

"Why, Tom! you must be mad, stark staring mad, jumping mad, horn mad, to be lying in port all this time! For plain or stark madness I should prescribe a simple strait-waistcoat;—staring madness may be alleviated by the use of green spectacles;—for jumping madness I have found a remedy in a custom used by the Siamese: when they take prisoners, they burn their feet to prevent them from running away;—horn madness is, indeed, beyond my skill: for that, Doctor's Commons is the place. I am vexed and provoked for you to see prizes brought in under your nose. . . . . .

My books have had an increase since you left. I have

bought a huge lot of Cody, tempted by the price; books of voyages and travels, and the Asiatic Researches. The Annual Review is not yet published. Amadis still goes on slowly, but draws near an end. . . . . Do you see—and if you have seen the Morning Post, you will have seen—that a poem upon Amadis is advertised? This is curious enough. It seems by the advertisement that it only takes in the first book. If the author have either any civility or any brains, he will send me a copy; the which I am not so desirous of as I should be, as it will cost me twenty shillings to send him one in return. However, I shall like to see his book; it may make a beautiful poem, and it looks well that he has stopt at the first book, and avoided the length of story: but, unless he be a very good poet indeed, I should prefer the plain dress of romance.

"I have been very hard at history, and have almost finished, since your departure, that thick folio chronicle which you may remember I was about skin-deep in, and which has supplied me with matter for half a volume. This war terrifies and puzzles me about Portugal. I think of going over alone this next winter, while I can. I have fifteen quartos on the way from Lisbon; and, zounds! if they should be taken! . . . . . Next month I shall go to London. The hard exercise of walking the streets will do me good. My picture in the Exhibition* pleases everybody, I hear; I wish you had seen it.

". . . . . .

Remember my advice about all Dutch captains in

* This picture was by Opie, and is the one engraved in this work.

your cruise: go always to the bottom in your examination; tin cases will sound if they be kicked, and paper will rustle; to you it may be the winning a prize: the loss is but a kick, and that the Dutchman gains. Do you know that I actually must learn Dutch! that I cannot complete the East Indian part of my history without it. Good bye.

R. S.

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"June 9. 1803.

"I have just gone through the Scottish Border Ballads. Walter Scott himself is a man of great talent and genius; but wherever he patches an old poem, it is always with new bricks. Of the modern ballads, his own fragment is the only good one, and that is very good. I am sorry to see Leyden's good for so little. Sir Agrethorn is flat, foolish, Matthewish, Gregoryish, Lewisish. I have been obliged to coin vituperative adjectives on purpose, the language not having terms enough of adequate abuse. I suppose the word Flodden-Field entitles it to a place here, but the scene might as well have been laid in El-dorado, or Tothill Fields, or the country of Prester John, for anything like costume which it possesses. It is odd enough that almost every passage which Scott has quoted from Froissart should be among the extracts which I had made.

"In all these modern ballads there is a modernism

of thought and language-turns, to me very perceptible and very unpleasant, the more so for its mixture with antique words—polished steel and rusty iron! This is the case in all Scott's ballads. His Eve of St. John's is a better ballad in story than any of mine, but it has this fault. Elmsley once asked me to versify that on the Glenfinlas—to try the difference of style; but I declined it, as waste labour and an invidious task. Matthew G. Lewis, Esq., M.P., sins more grievously in this way; he is not enough versed in old English to avoid it: Scott and Leyden are, and ought to have written more purely. I think if you will look at Q. Orraca you will perceive that, without being a canto from our old ballads, it has quite the ballad character of language.

"Scott, it seems, adopts the same system of metre with me, and varies his tune in the same stanza from iambic to anapæstic *ad libitum*. In spite of all the trouble that has been taken to torture Chaucer into heroic metre, I have no doubt whatever that he wrote upon this system, common to all the ballad writers. Coleridge agrees with me upon this. The proof is, that, read him thus, and he becomes everywhere harmonious; but expletive syllables, en's and y's and e's, only make him halt upon ten lame toes. I am now daily drinking at that pure well of English undefiled, to get historical manners, and to learn English and poetry.

"His volume of the Border Songs is more amusing for its prefaces and notes than its poetry: the ballads themselves were written in a very unfavourable age and country; the costume less picturesque than chi-

valry, the manners more barbarous. I shall be very glad to see the Sir Tristram which Scott is editing: the old Cornish knight has been one of my favourite heroes for fifteen years. Those Romances that Ritson published are fine studies for a poet. This I am afraid will have more Scotch in it than will be pleasant; I never read Scotch poetry without rejoicing that we have not Welsh-English into the bargain, and a written brogue.

. . . . .

Rickman tells me there will be no army sent to Portugal; that it is understood the French may overrun it at pleasure, and that then we lay open Brazil and Spanish America. If, indeed, the Prince of Brazil could be persuaded to go over there, and fix the seat of his government in a colony fifty times as large, and five hundred fold more valuable, than the mother country, England would have a trade opened to it far more than equivalent to the loss of the Portuguese and Spanish ports. But if he remains under the protection of France, and is compelled to take a part against England, any expedition to Brazil must be for mere plunder. Conquest is quite impossible.

"Most likely I shall go up to town in about a week or ten days. God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"June 12. 1803.

"Why, Grosvenor, that is an idle squeamishness of yours, that asking a previous leave to speak. Where my conscience becomes second to your challenge, the offence shall be amended; where we differ, mine is the voice potential. But, in truth, I will tell you that I am out of humour with Kehama, for half a hundred reasons: historical composition is a source of greater, and quieter, and more continuous pleasure; and that poem sometimes comes into my head with a —shall I sit down to it? and this is so easily turned out again, that the want of inclination would make me half suspect a growing want of power, if some rhymes and poemets did not now and then come out and convince me to the contrary. . . . . Abuse away *ad libitum*.

"If Cumberland must have a Greek name, there is but one that fits him — Aristophanes — and that for the worst part of his character. If his plays had any honest principle in them, instead of that eternal substitution of honour for honesty, of a shadow for a substance — if his novels were not more profligate in their tendency than Matthew Lewis's unhappy book — if the perusal of his Calvary were not a cross heavy enough for any man to bear who has ever read ten lines of Milton — if the man were innocent of all these things, he ought never to be forgiven for his

attempt to blast the character of Socrates. Right or wrong, no matter, the name had been canonised, and, God knows, wisdom and virtue have not so many saints that they can spare an altar to his clumsy pickaxe. I am no blind bigot to the Greeks, but I will take the words of Plato and greater Xenophon against Richard Cumberland, Esq.

"..... .....

The Grenvilles are in the right, but they got right by sticking in the wrong: they turned their faces westward in the morning, and swore the sun was there; and they have stood still and sworn on, till, sure enough, there the sun is. But they stand upon the strong ground now, and have the argument all hollow; yet what is to come of it, and what do they want—their country asks that question. War? They have it; every man in the country says Amen, and they whose politics are most democratic say Amen most loudly and most sincerely. In spite of their speeches, I cannot wish them in; and, when change of ministry is talked of, cannot but feel with Fox, that, little as I may like them, ten to one I shall like their successors worse, and sure I am that worse war ministers than the last cannot curse this country. .

. . . . . .

These men behaved so well upon Despard's business, and have shown such a respect to the liberties and feelings of this country, that they have fully won my good will. I believe they will make a sad piecemeal patchwork administration. . . . . It does seem that, by some fatality, the best talents of the

kingdom are for ever to be excluded from its government. Fox has not done well, not what I could have wished; but yet I reverence that man so truly, that whenever he appears to me to have erred, I more than half suspect my own judgment.

"I am promised access to the King's library, by Heber; and, indeed, it is a matter of considerable consequence that I should obtain it. Morning, noon, and night, I do nothing but read chronicles, and collect from them; and I have travelled at a great rate since the burthen of translating and reviewing has been got rid of: but this will not last long; I must think by and by of some other job-work, and turn to labour again, that I may earn another holyday.

"I call Margaret, by way of avoiding all commonplace phraseology of endearment, a worthy child and a most excellent character. She loves me better than any one except her mother; her eyes are as quick as thought, she is all life and spirit, and as happy as the day is long: but that little brain of hers is never at rest, and it is painful to see how dreams disturb her. A Dios!

R. S."

Soon after the date of the letter, my father paid a short visit to London, the chief purpose of which was to negotiate with Messrs. Longman and Rees respecting "the management of a Bibliotheca Britannica upon a very extensive scale, to be arranged chronologically, and made a readable book by biography, criticism, and connecting chapters, to be published like the Cyclopædia in parts, each volume

800 quarto pages." "The full and absolute choice of all associates, and the distribution of the whole," to be in his hands. And, in order to be near the publisher, as well as for the convenience of communicating with the majority of those whom he hoped to associate with him in the work,— of whom the chief were Mr. Sharon Turner, Mr. Rickman, Captain Burney, Mr. Carlisle*, Mr. William Taylor, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Duppa, and Mr. Owen,—he purposed removing very shortly to Richmond, where, indeed, he had already obtained the refusal of a house.

Upon concluding his agreement with Messrs. Longman and Rees, he seems to have communicated at once with Mr. Coleridge, whose letter in reply the reader will not be displeased to have laid before him, containing, as it does, the magnificent plan of a work almost too vast to have been conceived by any other person. Alas! that the plans of such a mind should have been but splendid dreams.

S. T. Coleridge to R. Southey.

"Keswick, July, 1803.

"My dear Southey,

"[illegible]

I write now to propose a scheme, or rather a rude outline of a scheme, of your grand work. What harm can a proposal do? If it be no pain to you to reject it, it will be none to me to have it rejected. I would have the work entitled Bibliotheca Britannica,

* Afterwards Sir Anthony Carlisle.

or an History of British Literature, bibliographical, biographical, and critical. The two *last* volumes I would have to be a chronological catalogue of all noticeable or extant books; the others, be the number six or eight, to consist entirely of separate treatises, each giving a critical biblio-biographical history of some one subject. I will, with great pleasure, join you in learning Welsh and Erse: and you, I, Turner, and Owen, might dedicate ourselves for the first half year to a complete history of all Welsh, Saxon, and Erse books that are not translations, that are the native growth of Britain. If the Spanish neutrality continues, I will go in October or November to Biscay, and throw light on the Basque.

"Let the next volume contain the history of *English* poetry and poets, in which I would include all prose truly poetical. The first half of the second volume should be dedicated to great single names, Chaucer and Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton and Taylor, Dryden and Pope; the poetry of witty logic,—Swift, Fielding, Richardson, Sterne: I write *per hazard*, but I mean to say all great names as have either formed epochs in our taste, or such, at least, as are representative; and the great object to be in each instance to determine, first, the true merits and demerits of the *books;* secondly, what of these belong to the age—what to the author *quasi peculium.* The second half of the second volume should be a history of poetry and romances, everywhere interspersed with biography, but more flowing, more consecutive, more bibliographical, chronological, and complete. The third volume I would have

dedicated to English prose, considered as to style, as to eloquence, as to general impressiveness; a history of styles and manners, their causes, their birth-places and parentage, their analysis. . . . . .

"These three volumes would be so generally interesting, so exceedingly entertaining, that you might bid fair for a sale of the work at large. Then let the fourth volume take up the history of metaphysics, theology, medicine, alchemy, common, canon, and Roman law, from Alfred to Henry VIII.; in other words, a history of the dark ages in Great Britain. The fifth volume — carry on metaphysics and ethics to the present day in the first half; the second half, comprise the theology of all the reformers. In the fourth volume there would be a grand article on the philosophy of the theology of the Roman Catholic religion. In this (fifth volume), under different names, — Hooker, Baxter, Biddle, and Fox,—the spirit of the theology of all the other parts of Christianity. The sixth and seventh volumes must comprise all the articles you can get, on all the separate arts and sciences that have been treated of in books since the Reformation; and, by this time, the book, if it answered at all, would have gained so high a reputation, that you need not fear having whom you liked to write the different articles — medicine, surgery, chemistry, &c. &c., navigation, travellers, voyagers, &c. &c. If I go into Scotland, shall I engage Walter Scott to write the history of Scottish poets? Tell me, however, what you think of the plan. It would have one prodigious advantage: whatever accident stopped the work, would only prevent the future good, not

mar the past; each volume would be a great and valuable work *per se.* Then each volume would awaken a new interest, a new set of readers, who would buy the past volumes of course; then it would allow you ample time and opportunities for the slavery of the catalogue volumes, which should be at the same time an index to the work, which would be, in very truth, a pandect of knowledge alive and swarming with human life, feeling, incident. By the by, what a strange abuse has been made of the word encyclopædia! It signifies, properly, grammar, logic, rhetoric, and ethics and metaphysics which last, explaining the ultimate principles of grammar — log., rhet., and eth. — formed a circle of knowledge. . . . . To call a huge unconnected miscellany of the *omne scibile,* in an arrangement determined by the accident of initial letters an encyclopædia, is the impudent ignorance of your Presbyterian bookmakers. Good night!

God bless you!

S. T. C."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Bristol, Aug. 3. 1803.

"Dear Coleridge,

"I meant to have written sooner; but those little units of interruption and preventions, which sum up to as ugly an aggregate as the items in a lawyer's bill, have come in the way. .

Your plan is too good, too gigantic, quite beyond my powers. If you had my tolerable state of health, and that love of steady and productive employment which is now grown into a necessary habit with me, if you were to execute and would execute it, it would be, beyond all doubt, the most valuable work of any age or any country; but I cannot fill up such an outline. No man can better feel where he fails than I do; and to rely upon you for whole quartos! Dear Coleridge, the smile that comes with that thought is a very melancholy one; and if Edith saw me now, she would think my eyes were weak again, when, in truth, the humour that covers them springs from another cause.

"For my own comfort, and credit, and peace of mind, I must have a plan which I know myself strong enough to execute. I can take author by author as they come in their series, and give his life and an account of his works quite as well as ever it has yet been done. I can write connecting paragraphs and chapters shortly and pertinently, in my way; and in this way the labour of all my associates can be more easily arranged. . . . . And, after all, this is really nearer the actual design of what I purport by a bibliotheca than yours would be,—a book of reference, a work in which it may be seen what has been written upon every subject in the British language: this has elsewhere been done in the dictionary form; whatever we get better than that form —*ponemus lucro.*

"The Welsh part, however, should be kept coin-

pletely distinct, and form a volume, or half a volume, by itself; and this must be delayed till the last in publication, whatever it be in order, because it cannot be done till the whole of the Archæology is printed, and by that time I will learn the language, and so, perhaps, will you. George Ellis is about it; I think that, with the help of Turner and Owen, and poor Williams, we could then do everything that ought to be done.

"The first part, then, to be published is the Saxon; this Turner will execute, and to this you and William Taylor may probably both be able to add something from your stores of northern knowledge. The Saxon books all come in sequence chronologically; then the mode of arrangement should be by centuries, and the writers classed as poets, historians, &c., by *centuries*, or by *reigns*, which is better. . . .

. . . . . .

Upon this plan the Schoolmen will come in the first volume.

"The historical part of the theology, and the bibliographical, I shall probably execute myself, and you will do the philosophy. By the by, I have lately found the book of John Perrott the Quaker, who went to convert the Pope, containing all his epistles to the Romans, &c., written in the Inquisition at Rome; for they allowed him the privilege of writing, most likely because his stark madness amused them. This fellow (who turned rogue at last, wore a sword, and persecuted the Quakers in America to make

George Fox, insisting that hats should be kept on in meeting during speaking, (has not this prevailed?) and that the Friends should not shave. His book is the most frantic I ever saw, quite Gilbertish; and the man acted up to it.

God bless you!

CHAPTER X.

DEATH OF HIS LITTLE GIRL. — ARRIVAL AT KESWICK. — POSTPONEMENT OF THE BIBLIOTHECA BRITANNICA. — STAGNATION OF TRADE. — MADOC. — SCENERY OF THE LAKES. — HISTORY OF PORTUGAL. — HASLITT'S PICTURES OF MR. COLERIDGE AND MR. WORDSWORTH. — WANTS INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WEST INDIES. — LITERARY OCCUPATIONS AND PLANS. — THE ANNUAL REVIEW. — POLITICS. — THE YELLOW FEVER — NEW THEORY OF SUCH DISEASES. — DESCRIPTION OF SCENERY REFLECTED IN KESWICK LAKE. — SPECIMENS OF ENGLISH POETS PROJECTED. — COURSE OF LIFE AT KESWICK. — VISIT FROM MR. CLARKSON. — HABITS OF MIND. — MADOC. — MR. COLERIDGE AND MR. GODWIN. — DIRECTIONS TO MR. BEDFORD ABOUT SPECIMENS. — REGRET AT MR. COLERIDGE LEAVING ENGLAND. — MODERN CRITICS. — MR. COLERIDGE'S POWERS OF MIND. — LETTER TO MR. BEDFORD ON HABITS OF PROCRASTINATION. — LITERARY EMPLOYMENTS. — SPECIMENS OF ENGLISH POETS. — GOES TO LONDON. — LETTERS FROM THENCE. — RETURN. — SPANISH BOOKS. — THE MABINOGION. — SIR H. DAVY. — MR. SOTHEBY. — WILLIAM OWEN, ETC. — CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION. — PROGRESS OF HISTORICAL LABOURS. — 1804.

SUCH were my father's plans at the commencement of the month, — to take up his abode at Richmond, and to devote himself almost wholly to this great work; and, had nothing interfered to prevent this scheme being carried into effect, his future life would probably have taken, in some respects, a very

different course. He was now, as it were, about to cast anchor (as he used himself to phrase it), and, as it proved even against probabilities, the place where he now fixed himself was to be his permanent abode. But the Bibliotheca Britannica was not to be the turning point of his life; nor were the banks of Thames and the fair and fertile scenes of Richmond to inspire his verse. Public troubles and private griefs, combined to disarrange his present plans, and to influence his future ones. The little girl whose birth had been so joyfully hailed barely a twelvemonth before, of whom he was "foolishly fond" beyond the common love of fathers for mere infants, who had hitherto shown "no sign of disease, save a somewhat unnatural quickness and liveliness," now suddenly began to manifest unequivocal tokens of the presence of one of those diseases most fatal to children (and often worse than fatal, as permanently affecting the intellect), "hydrocephalus" produced by teething; and, after happily a brief period of suffering, she was laid to her early rest, and the fond parents were again childless.

Bristol was now a place only recalling painful sensations, and Mr. and Mrs. Coleridge being still resident at Keswick, my father and mother hastened down thither.

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Greta Hall, Keswick, Sept. 8. 1803.

"Dear Tom,

"We arrived yesterday. Yours reached me today. I was glad to hear from you; — a first letter after such a loss is always expected with some sort of fear, — it is the pulling off the bandage that has been put upon a green wound. . . . .

"Edith was very ill at Bristol. On the way we staid five days with Miss Barker, in Staffordshire — one of the people in the world whom I like. To escape from Bristol was a relief. The place was haunted, and it is my wish never to see it again. Here my spirits suffer from the sight of little Sara*, who is about her size. However, God knows that I do not repine, and that in my very soul I feel that his will is best. These things do one good: they loosen, one by one, the roots that rivet us to earth; they fix and confirm our faith till the thought of death becomes so inseparably connected with the hope of meeting those whom we have lost, that death itself is no longer considered as an evil.

"Did I tell you that, in this universal panic and palsy, Longman has requested me to delay the Bibliotheca? This is a relief to me. I feel freer and easier. In consequence, I do not go to Richmond, but remain here, where I can live for half the expense. My design is to finish and print Madoc, that by the profits I may be enabled to go to Por-

* Mr. Coleridge's only daughter.

tugal. But my plans have been so often blasted, that I look upon every thing as quite vague and uncertain. This only you may know, that while I am well I am actively employed; and that now, not being happy enough for the quiet half-hours of idleness, I must work with double dispatch.

"I hope you will see the Annual Review. There are some admirable things by Wm. Taylor in it; my own part is very respectable, and one article I hear is by Harry. I shall probably do more in the next volume. You could have helped me in the maritime books. Do you know Harry is an ensign in the Norwich Volunteers?

"Edward has written to me; he was to go on board the following day. I could not at that time see to his fitting out as I should have done; but, when once fairly quit of her*, the boy shall not want as far as my means will go. It is you and I who have fared the worst; the other two will have fewer difficulties to cope with, yet perhaps they will not go on so well. Men are the better for having suffered; — of that, every year's experience more and more convinces me.

"Edith suffers deeply and silently. She is kept awake at night by recollections, — and I am harassed by dreams of the poor child's illness and recovery, but this will wear away. Would that you could see these lakes and mountains! how wonderful they are! how aweful in their beauty. All the poet-part of me will be fed and fostered here. I feel already in tune, and shall proceed to my work with such a

* Miss Tyler.

feeling of power as old Sampson had when he laid hold of the pillars of the Temple of Dagon. The Morning Post will somewhat interrupt me. Stuart has paid me so well for doing little, that in honesty I must work hard for him. Edith will copy you some of my rhymes.

"Amadis is most abominably printed; never book had more printer's blunders: how it sells is not in my power to say, — in all likelihood, badly; for all trade is suspended, to a degree scarcely credible. I heard some authentic instances at Bristol. Hall, the grocer, used to have tea and sugar weighed out in pounds and half pounds, &c., on a Saturday night, for his country customers. Thirty years' established business enabled him to proportion the quantity to this regular demand almost to a nicety. He has had as much as twenty *pounds'* WORTH uncalled for. Mrs. Morgan on a Saturday used to take, upon the average, 30*l.* in her shop; she now does not take 5*l.* But his will wear away. I am quite provoked at the folly of any man who can feel a moment's fear for his country at this time.

"We look to the Morning Post, with daily disappointment, for news of the Galatea. Stuart has sold the paper, having thus realised 25,000*l.* While his advice and influence upholds it, little difference will be perceived; but whenever that be withdrawn, I prophesy a slow decline and downfall. How comes on the Spanish? you will find it useful before the war is over, I fear, — *fear,* because the Spaniards are a good and honourable people; and, in spite of the plunder which will fall to the share of the sailors, I

cannot but wish they may be spared from suffering in a war to which they assuredly are averse.

"God bless you, Tom. You must enquire of Danvers for Joe*; he will look after him, and drop a card occasionally at his door. Poor fellow, I was sorry to leave him — 'twas a heart-breaking day, that of our departure. Can't you contrive to chase some French frigate through the race of Holyhead up to the Isle of Man, engage her there, and bring her into Whitehaven? Edith's love.

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Keswick, Oct. 29. 1803.

"Dear Tom,

"Your letter did not reach me till yesterday, eight days after its date, so that, though this be the earliest reply, perhaps it may not arrive at Cork till after your departure. This place is better suited for me than you imagine — it tempts me to take far more exercise than I ever took elsewhere, for we have the loveliest scenes possible close at hand; and I have, therefore, seldom or never felt myself in stronger health. And as for good spirits, be sure I have the outward and visible sign, however it may be for the inward and spiritual grace.

"My reviewing, more than ordinarily procrastinated, stands still. I began Clarke's book, and having vented my gall there, laid the others all by till the first

* A favourite terrier.

of November, that I might be free till then for work more agreeable. My main work has been Madoc. I am now arrived at the old fifth book, and at the twelfth of the booklings into which it is now divided. I mean to call them neither books, cantos, nor any thing else, but simply 1, 2, 3, &c., entitling each part from its peculiar action: thus, 1. The Return; 2. Cadwallon; 3. The Voyage; 4. Lincoya; 5. The War; 6. The Battle; 7. The Peace; 8. Emma; 9. Mathraval; 10. The Gorsedd, *i. e.* the Meeting of the Bards; 11. Dinevawr; 12. Bards, — and so on. The eleven divisions finished, which bring it down to the end of the old fourth book, contain 2536 lines, — an increase on the whole of 731; but of the whole not one line in five stands as originally written. About 9000 lines will be the extent; but the farther I proceed the less alteration will be needed. When I turn the half-way I shall then say to my friends, 'Now, get me subscribers, and I will publish Madoc.' In what is done there is some of my best workmanship. I shall get by it less money than fame, and less fame than envy, but the envy will be only life-long; and when that is gone and the money spent — you know the old rhyme.

"It seems we are to have war with poor Portugal. If this be the case, my uncle must of course settle in England. This would be very pleasant to me, were it not so deeply and rootedly my own desire to settle in Portugal; but, *adonde não he remedio, então pdciencia*, as I learnt from the Portuguese. This war has affected me in every possible shape; in the King George packet I lost a whole cargo of books,

for which I had been a year and a half waiting, and my uncle searching.

"I must go to work for money; and that also frets me. This hand-to-mouth work is very disheartening, and interferes cruelly with better things, — more important they cannot be called, for the bread-and-cheese is the business of the first necessity. But from my History I do expect permanent profit, and such a perpetual interest as shall relieve me. I shall write the volume of letters which you have heard me talk of, — an omnium-gatherum of the odd things I have seen in England.

"Whenever you are at a decent distance, and can get leave of absence, do come. Get to Liverpool by water, or, still better, to Whitehaven. You will be thoroughly delighted with the country. The mountains, on Thursday evening, before the sun was quite down, or the moon bright, were all of one dead-blue colour; their rifts, and rocks, and swells, and scars had all disappeared — the surface was perfectly uniform, nothing but the outline distinct; and this even surface of dead blue, from its unnatural uniformity, made them, though not transparent, appear transvious, — as though they were of some soft or cloudy texture through which you could have passed. I never saw any appearance so perfectly unreal. Sometimes a blazing sunset seems to steep them through and through with red light; or it is a cloudy morning, and the sunshine slants down through a rift in the clouds, and the pillar of light makes the spot whereon it falls so emerald green, that it looks like a little field of Paradise. At night you lose the

mountains, and the wind so stirs up the lake that it looks like the sea by moonlight. Just behind the house rises a fine mountain, by name Latrigg; it joins Skiddaw; we walked up yesterday,—a winding path of three quarters of an hour, and then *rode down on our own burros*, in seven minutes. Jesu-Maria-Jozè! that was a noble ride! but I will have a saddle made for my burro next time. The path of our slide is still to be seen from the garden — so near is it. One of these days I will descend Skiddaw in the same manner, and so immortalize myself.

"There is a carpenter here, James Lawson by name, who is become my Juniper* in the board-making way. He has made me a pair, of walnut, the large size, and of a reddish wood, from Demerara the small, and is about to get me some yew. This, as you may suppose, is a consolation to me, and it requires all Edith's powers of prudential admonition to dissuade me from having a little table with a drawer in it. His father† asked Derwent yesterday who made him? *D.*: James Lawson. '*Father*: And what did he make you of? *D.*: The stuff he makes wood of. When Derwent had got on thus far in his system of Derwentogony, his imagination went on, and he added,—'he sawed me off, and I did not like it.'

"We began to wonder uneasily that there was no news of you. Edith's love. God bless you!

R. S.'

† Mr. Coleridge.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Greta Hall, Keswick, Nov. 10. 1803.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"You will have guessed why I have not written: to say any thing about a painful subject is painful; I do not love to write concerning what I never mention. I am very well, very cheerful, and very actively employed; and yet, with all this, *hæret lateri.*

"You asked me some questions about the Bibliotheca. Longman wrote to me to postpone it, he being infected with the universal panic. I was no ways averse to the delay of the scheme—the discontinuance being optional with me. In truth, I have plans enough without it, and begin to think that my day's work is already sufficiently cut out for me. I am preparing Madoc for publication, and have so far advanced in the correction as to resolve upon trying my fortune at a subscription. I will print it for a guinea, in one quarto, if possible at that price; if not, in three small volumes. I will not *print* my intention till the success of a subscription has been tried privately; that is, without being published; because if it fails, I can better go to a bookseller. If you can procure me some names, do; but never make yourself uncomfortable by asking. Of course, no money till the delivery of the book.

"It is now fifteen years since the subject first came into my occiput,—and I believe Wynn was made

acquainted with it almost at the time: it has been so much the subject of my thoughts and dreams, that in completing it, in sending off what has been so peculiarly and solely my own, there is a sort of awfulness and feeling, as if one of the purposes of my existence will then be accomplished. . . . . .

"I am growing old, Bedford; not so much by the family bible, as by all external and outward symptoms: the grey hairs have made their appearance; my eyes are wearing out; my shoes, the very cut of my father's, at which I used to laugh; my limbs not so supple as they were at Brixton in '93; my tongue not so glib; my heart quieter; my hopes, thoughts, and feelings, all of the complexion of a sunny autumn evening. I have a sort of presage that I shall live to finish Madoc and my History. God grant it, and that then my work will be done.

God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Nov. 18. 1803.

"Dear Rickman,

"I am manufacturing a piece of Paternoster Row goods, value three guineas, out of Captain Burney's book; and not very easy work, it being always more difficult to dilate praise than censure: however, by help of Barros I have been able to collate accounts with him in the great voyage of Magelhaens (for he

has misnamed him), and so to eke out my pages by additions. About the other worthy, Sir Francis, I have invented a quaint rhyme, which I shall insert as ancient, and modestly wonder that, as the author has a genuine love for all quaint things, it should have escaped his researches:

'Oh Nature, to Old England true,
Continue these mistakes;
Give us for our Kings such Queens,
And for our Dux such Drakes.'

" . . . . . .

My History goes on well; I am full sail in the Asiatic Channel, and have found out some odd things. The Christians of St. Thomas worshipped the Virgin Mary, which throws back that superstition to an earlier date than is generally allowed it. The astrolabe, the quadrant, the compass, were found in the east, *quomodo diabolus?* Martin Behaim invented the sea astrolabe at Lisbon, by express direction of Joam II., and behold! within ten or a dozen years Vasco da Gama finds it in India.

" They had gunpowder there, espingards, what shall I call them? and cannon; but the Portuguese owed their success to the great superiority of their artillery: in fact, the main improvements in sea artillery were invented by Joam II. himself. But the great intercourse between India and the old world is most remarkable in the first voyage of Gama: he met with a moor of Fez, a moor of Tunis, a *Venetian* and a Polish Jew. The world was not so ignorant as has been supposed; individuals possessed knowledge, which

there were no motives for communicating; no sooner was it known that K. Joam II. would reward people for intelligence respecting the East, than two of his own Jew subjects came, and told him they had been there. The commercial spirit of the Moors is truly astonishing; Dutchmen or East India directors could not be more jealous of their monopolies. The little kingdoms which Gama found resemble Homer's Phæacia. Every city had its monarch, and he was the great merchant, his brothers were captains of ships. Spice, spice, was what the Europeans wanted; and for what could they require it in such quantities and at such a cost? spiced wines go but a little way in answering this. The Hindoos, too, wanted coral from the Portuguese — odd fellows! when it grows in their own seas. I believe the Portuguese conquests to have been the chief cause that barbarised the Mohammedans; their spreading commerce would else have raised up a commercial interest, out of which an enlightened policy might have grown. The Koran was a masterpiece of policy, attributing sanctity to its language. Arabic thus became a sort of freemason's passport for every believer, — a bond of fraternity. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Richard Duppa, Esq.

"Greta Hall, Keswick, Dec. 14. 1803.

"Dear Duppa,

"I have not had the heart to write to you, though the long silence has lain like a load upon my conscience. When we parted I had as much present happiness as man could wish, and was full of all cheerful hopes: however, no man, if he be good for any thing, but is the better for suffering. It has long been my habit to look for the good that is to be found in every thing, and that alchemy is worth more than the grand secret of all the adepts.

"I had almost completed my arrangements for removing to Richmond at Christmas, and here we are at the uttermost end of the north, and here for some time we shall probably remain; how long, God knows. I am steady in my pursuits, for they depend upon myself; but my plans and fortunes, being of the τὰ οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, are more mutable; they are fairly afloat, and the winds are more powerful than the steersman. Longman caught the alarm—the Bonaparte ague or English influenza—after I left town, and sent to me to postpone my Bibliotheca, at the very time when I wished the engagement off my mind, not being in a state of mind to contemplate it with courage. He shall now wait my convenience, and I shall probably finish off my own works of choice here, where, living cheaper, I have more leisure. My History is in a state of rapid progression. The

last time I saw Mr. —— in town he gave me a draft for fifty pounds as his subscription, he said, to this work. I tell you this because you know him, and, therefore, not to tell you would make me feel ungrateful for an act of uncommon liberality, done in the handsomest way possible. I little thought, at the time, how soon an unhappy circumstance would render the sum needful. This work I am alternating and relieving by putting Madoc to the press, and my annual job of reviewing interrupts both for awhile; but, happily, this job comes, like Christmas, but once a year, and I have almost killed off my contemporaries.

"Haslitt, whom you saw at Paris, has been here; a man of real genius. He has made a very fine picture of Coleridge for Sir George Beaumont, which is said to be in Titian's manner; he has also painted Wordsworth, but so dismally, though Wordsworth's face is his idea of physiognomical perfection, that one of his friends, on seeing it, exclaimed, 'At the gallows—deeply affected by his deserved fate—yet determined to die like a man;' and if you saw the picture, you would admire the criticism. We have a neighbour here who also knows you—Wilkinson, a clergyman, who draws, if not with much genius, with great industry and most useful fidelity. I have learnt a good deal by examining his collection of etchings.

"Holcroft, I hear, has discovered, to his own exceeding delight, prophetic portraits of himself and Coleridge among the damned in your Michael Angelo. I have found out a more flattering antetype

of Coleridge's face in Duns Scotus. Come you yourself and judge of the resemblances. Coleridge and our lakes and mountains are worth a longer journey. Autumn is the best season to see the country, but spring, and even winter, is better than summer, for in settled fine weather there are none of those goings on in heaven which at other times give these scenes such an endless variety. . . . . You will find this house a good station for viewing the lakes; it is, in fact, situated on perhaps the very finest single spot in the whole lake country, and we can show you things which the tourists never hear of.

"Edith desires to be remembered to you; she is but in indifferent health. I myself am as well as I ever was. The weather has been, and is, very severe, but it has not as yet hurt me; however, it must be owned the white bears have the advantage of us in England, and still more the dormice. If their torpor could be introduced into the human system, it would be a most rare invention. I should roll myself up at the end of October, and give orders to be waked by the chimney-sweeper on May-day.

"God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Dec. 17. 1803.

"Dear Tom,

"The news in your letter has vexed me, and, after my manner, set me upon discovering all the consolations that can be extracted from it. First and foremost, that if you go as convoy, you will not be stationed there; and, therefore, to sail at this season into warm weather is no such bad thing. If you go to Jamaica you will find a whole lot of letters, unless they have been burnt at the post-office. As you will keep a keen look-out for all imaginable things, I need give you only one commission, which is, that you do use your best endeavours to bring home a few live land-crabs for me, that I may endeavour to rear a breed in England.

"Do not send off Henry, because it will be lost at the custom-house; keep it till you yourself come to England, and can safely get it ashore; 'tis a good book for a long voyage—very dull, but full of matter, and trustworthy as far as the author's information goes.

"My review of Miss Baillie was for the Critical; that in the Annual I suspect to be by Mrs. Barbauld, who wrote the review of Chasteaubriand's Beauties of Christianity, and that infamous account of Lamb's Play, for infamous it is. Harry's only article is Soulavie's Memoirs, and I have never seen the book since this was told me. The rules you lay down will always point out Wm. Taylor.

"I think it possible, Tom, that you might collect some interesting information from the negroes, by inquiries of any who may wait upon you, if they be at all intelligent, concerning their own country; principally what their superstitions are — as Whom do they worship? Do they ever see apparitions? Where do the dead go? What are their burial, their birth, their marriage ceremonies? What their charms or remedies for sickness? What the power of their priests; and how the priests are chosen, whether from among the people, or if a separate breed, as the Levites and Bramins? You will easily see with what other questions these might be followed up; and by noting down the country of the negro, with what information he gave, it seems to me very likely that a very valuable account of their manners and feelings might be collected. Ask also if they know anything of Timbuctoo, the city which is sought after with so much curiosity as being the centre of the internal commerce of Africa. This is the way to collect facts respecting the native Africans and their country. I would engage, in twelve months, were I in the West Indies, to get materials for a volume that should contain more real importancies than all travellers have yet brought home. Ask also what beasts are in their country; they will not know English names for them, but can describe them so that you will know them: the unicorn is believed to exist by me as well as by many others, — you will not mistake the rhinoceros for one. Inquire also for a land crocodile, who grows to the length of six, eight, or ten feet, having a tongue slit like a snake's; my Portuguese

speak of such animals in South Africa—they may exist in the western provinces.

"You would have been very useful to me if you had been at the table when I was reviewing Clarke's book, and Captain Burney's. Indeed, I often want a sailor to help me out. In the process of my History some curious facts respecting early navigation have come to light. I find the needle and the quadrant used in the Indian seas before any European vessel had ever reached them; and, what surprises me more, the same knowledge of soundings in our own seas in 1400 as at present, which is very strange, for that practice implies a long series of registered experiences. The more I read, the more do I find the necessity of going to old authors for information, and the sad ignorance and dishonesty of our boasted historians. If God do but give me life, and health, and eyesight, I will show how history should be written, and exhibit such a specimen of indefatigable honesty as the world has never yet seen. I could make some historical triads, after the manner of my old Welsh friends, of which the first might run thus: The three requisites for an historian—industry, judgment, genius; the patience to investigate, the discrimination to select, the power to infer and to enliven.

"Edith's love. God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Dec. 23. 1803

"Dear Rickman,

". . . . . .

I am about a curious review of the Mission at Otaheite. Capt. Burney will find his friends rather roughly handled, for I look upon them as the most degraded of the human species. . . . . They have induced me to think it probable that the Spaniards did less evil in Hispaniola than we suppose. Coleridge's scheme to mend them is, by extirpating the bread-fruit from their island, and making them live by the sweat of their brows. It always grieves me when I think you are no friend to colonisation: my hopes fly farther than yours; I want English knowledge and the English language diffused to the east, and west, and the south.

"Can you get for me the evidence upon the Slave Trade as printed for the House of Commons? I want to collect all materials for speculating upon the negroes. That they are a fallen people is certain, because, being savages, they have among them the forms of civilisation. It is remarkable that, in all our discoveries, we have never discovered any people in a state of progression, except the Mexicans and Peruvians. That the Otaheiteans are a degraded race, is proved by their mythology, which is physical allegory — *ergo*, the work of people who thought of physics. I am very desirous to know whether the negro priests and

jugglers be a caste; or if any man may enter into the fraternity; and if they have a sacred language. We must continue to grope in darkness about early history, till some strong-headed man shall read the hieroglyphics for us. Much might yet be done by comparison of languages: some hundred words of the most common objects—sun, moon, and stars, the parts of the body, the personal pronouns, the auxiliary verbs, &c.,—if these were collected, as occasion could be found, from every different tribe, such languages as have been diffluent we should certainly be able to trace to their source. In New Holland, language is said to be confluent; every tribe, and almost family, having its own: but that island is an odd place—coral above water, and coal; new birds, beasts, and plants; and such a breed of savages! It looks like a new country, if one could tell where the animals came from.

'Do you know that the Dodo is actually extinct, having been, beyond doubt, too stupid to take care of himself. . . . . There is no hope of recovering the species, unless you could get your friend —— to sit upon a gander's egg. God bless you.

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Dec. 31. 1803.

"Dear Tom,

"I have just received yours, and regret that I did not write sooner, upon a reasonable calculation

that convoys are even more uncertain than packets. A letter, per bottle, I see by the newspapers, thrown in on the way to the West Indies, if I recollect right, in latitude 47, has found its way to the Isle of Sky, having travelled five miles per day *against* prevalent winds—therefore a current is certain. I will send into town for the paper, and send you the particulars in this or my next. Do not spare bottles in your passage; and be sure that I have a letter from the Western Isles.

"For God's sake adapt your mode of living to the climate you are going to, and abstain almost wholly from wine and spirits. General Peche, an East Indian officer here, with whom we dined on Christmas-day, told me that in India the officers who were looking out for preferment, as a majority, &c., and who kept lists of all above them, always marked those who drank any spirits in a morning with an X, and reckoned them for nothing. 'One day,' said he, 'when we were about to march at day-break, I and Captain —— were in my tent, and we saw a German of our regiment, so I said we'd try him; we called to him, said it was a cold morning, and asked him if he would drink a glass to warm him. I got him a full beaker of brandy-and-water, and, egad! he drank it off. When he was gone, I said, Well, what d'ye think, we may cross him, mayn't we? Oh yes, said he, cross him by all means. And the German did not live twelve months.' Spice is the stimulus given by nature to hot countries, and eaten in whatever quantities can do no harm. But the natives of all hot countries invariably abstain from spirits, as deadly.

Eat fruits plentifully, provided they do not produce flux; animal food sparingly in the hot season: fish will be better than meat. Do not venture to walk or ride in the heat of the sun; and do not be ashamed of a parasol,—it has saved many a man's life. I am sure all this is very physical and philosophical sense. But I will desire King, who knows the West Indies, to write out to you a letter of medical advice. This is certain, that bilious people fare worst, and nervous people, for fear predisposes for disease: from these causes you are safe.

"Edith will go on with Madoc for you, and a letter full shall go off for Barbadoes this week. My last set you upon a wide field of inquiry; I know not what can be added, unless you should be at St. Vincent's, where the Caribs would be well worthy attention; making the same queries of and to them as to the negroes. Of course there are no Spanish books except at the Spanish islands. Oh! that I were at Mexico for a hunt there! Could you bring home a live alligator? a little one, of course, from his hatching to six feet long; it would make both me and Carlisle quite happy, for he should have him. And pray, pray, some live land-crabs, *that they may breed;* and any other monsters. Birds lose their beauty; and I would not be accessory to the death of a humming-bird, for the sake of keeping his corpse in a cabinet: but with crocodiles, sharks, and land-crabs it is fair play—you catch them, or they you. Your own eyes will do all that I can direct them. How unfortunate that neither of us can draw! I want drawings of the trees.

"Thompson, the friend of Burns, whose correspondence with him about songs fills the whole fourth volume, has applied to me to write him verses for Welsh airs: of course I have declined it; telling him that I could as soon sing his songs as write them, and referring him to Harry, whom he knows, for an estimate of that simile of disqualification. Still I am at reviewing; but ten days will lighten me of that burthen, and then huzza for history, and huzza for Madoc, for I shall be a free man again! I have bought Pinkerton's Geography after all, for the love of the maps, having none; it is a useful book, and will save me trouble.

"We shall not think of holding any part of St. Domingo. What has been done can only have been for the sake of what plunder was to be found, and perhaps also to save the French army from the fate which they so justly deserved. God forbid that ever English hand be raised against the negroes in that island! Poor wretches! I regard them as I do the hurricane and the pestilence, blind instruments of righteous retribution and divine justice; and sure I am that whatever hand be lifted against them will be withered. Of Spanish politics I can say nothing, nor give even a surmise. Here at home we have the old story of invasion; upon which the types naturally range themselves into a very alarming and loyal leading paragraph. Let him come, say I, it will be a fine thing for the bell-ringers and the tallow-chandlers.

"I trust this will reach you before your departure. Write immediately on your arrival, and afterwards

by every packet, for any omission will make me uneasy. I will not be remiss on my part.

"God bless you! Edith's love. A happy new year, and many returns!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Greta Hall, Keswick, Jan. 9. 1804.

"*Infailix homo! infailix homo!* said a German to Coleridge, who did not understand for whom he was inquiring by the name of Tŵctŵr Tŵd; *infailix homo! suspensus a patibulo!* Without any patibulary reflexion, *infailix homo* is the soul of exclamation that your letter prompts. Zounds! if Giardini were in your inside, what an admirable solo he might play upon guts that must, by this time, have been fretted to fiddle-strings! I verily believe that your gripes must be organic, and not, as in all other men, bagpipical.

"The plain English of all this is, that your metaphysics, as you call them, are to your mind what a regular course of drastic physic would be to your body,—very disagreeable, and very weakening; that, being neither a man of business, nor of fashion, nor of letters, you want object and occupation in the world; and that if you would study Arabic, Welsh, or Chinese, or resolve to translate Tristram Shandy into Hebrew, you would soon be a happy man.

" . . . . . .

Here we live as regularly as clock-work; indeed, more

regularly than our own clocks, which go all paces. The old Barber has been at work for some days. I take Horace's liberty to personify the sky, and then simply barbarise the prosopopœia.

"Of the only three visitable families within reach, one is fled for the winter, and the others flying. *N'importe*, our dog Dapper remains, and he is as intimate with me as heart could wish. I want my books, and nothing else; for, blessed be God, I grow day by day more independent of society, and feel neither a want nor a wish for it. Every thing at present looks, from the window, like the confectioners' shops at this season in London; and Skiddaw is the hugest of twelfth-cakes: but when I go down by the lake side, it would puzzle all my comparison-compounding fancy to tell you what it looks like there—the million or trillion forms of beauty soon baffle all description.

"Coleridge is gone for Devonshire, and I was going to say I am alone, but that the sight of Shakspeare, and Spenser, and Milton, and the Bible, on my table, and Castanheda, and Barros, and Osorio at my elbow, tell me I am in the best of all possible company. Do not think of getting any subscribers for Madoc; I am convinced the plan of publishing it by subscription was foolish, and shall doubtless convince those who induced me to think of it. Have you seen the Critical Reviewal of Thalaba? I wish to see it, for it comes not only from one of my best friends, but from one of the most learned, most able, and most excellent men within the circle of my knowledge."

My brother Harry is at Edinburgh, distinguishing himself as a disputant in the Medical Society. Poor Tom is going for the West Indies! What are our dunces sending troops there for? I could find in my heart to set at them; for, to tell you the truth, a set-to at the Methodists in this Review has put me in a very pamphleteering mood.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"January 20. 1804.

"Dear Rickman,

". . . . . .

Arthur Aikin writes me, that 1200 of the Annual Review have sold of 2000 that were printed, and that the demand continues unabated. He is in high spirits at its success, and wishes me to come to London,—looking upon me, I suppose, as one of his staff-officers—as, in fact, William Taylor and I constitute his main strength. It is clear enough that if I regarded pen-and-inkmanship solely as a trade, I might soon give in an income of double the present amount; but I am looking forward to something better, and will not be tempted from the pursuit in which I have so long and so steadily persevered. . . . .

This vile reviewing still birdlimes me; I do it slower than any thing else—yawning over tiresome work; and parcel comes down after parcel, so that I have

already twice whooped before I was out of the wood. Yesterday Malthus received, I trust, a mortal wound from my hand; to-day I am at the Asiatic Researches. Godwin's Life of Chaucer is on the road to me: by the by, the philosopher came in for a hard rap over the knuckles with Mr. Malthus. These things keep me from better employment, but they whet the desire for it, and I shall return to my Portuguese society with doubled zest.

"In the dark ages, medicine was in the hands of the Jews. Why was this? Am I right in supposing it was because they travelled, and brought with them the wisdom and experience, as well as folly, of the East? Christians could not travel safely; but Hebrew, like Arabic, was a passport, for synagogues and mosques were everywhere. A decree of the Lateran Council, that the sacrament should be *first prescribed* to the sick, seems levelled against Jew physicians.

"Have you read the Institutes of Menu, translated by Sir W. Jones? I should be very glad to see your corollaries from that book. Hindostan, indeed the whole of civilised Asia, puzzles me, and provokes me that we should have so few documents to reason from. As far as their history can be unravelled from fable, nothing is discoverable but the war of *sects*, not of religions; and how so ridiculous a religion should have been so blended with astronomy, how allegory should put on so ugly a mask, is a puzzle.

". . . . . .

I am well, but have an ominous dimness of sight at times, which makes me think of Tobin; that would

indeed be a sore visitation! but I will feed while the summer lasts, that my paws may be fat enough to last licking through the dark winter, if it must come.

Vale!

R. S."

To Messrs. Longman and Rees.

"Jan. 26. 1804.

"Dear Sirs,

"If Mr. ——'s little tale (which reached me last night) be long enough for publication, I should think it possesses sufficient interest to be saleable. The author is, in my judgment, a man of very considerable, and indeed extraordinary, talents. This —— he has probably written hastily, and, I fear, upon the spur of want.

"Having myself sought after information respecting the countries on the Mississippi, I can say that the descriptions and natural history are, as far as my knowledge goes, accurate, and therefore it is fair to presume that such circumstances as were new to me are equally true to nature.

"I know nothing of —— but from his Travels; from that he appears to be a self-taught man, who has all his life long been struggling with difficulties; and the book left upon me a melancholy impression, that, however much adversity had quickened his talents, it had injured his moral feelings. Pride and vanity are only defensive vices in a poor and neglected

man of talents; and being defensive, they cease to be vices. Something of the same palliation, may be pleaded for an evident libertinism of heart and thought which is everywhere too manifest in his book; in this he resembles Smollett and Defoe, which last truly great man he resembles also in better things.

"Should you execute your design of the Collection of Voyages and Travels, which I hope and trust you will, this man might be made exceedingly useful to you. Being himself a sailor, and having seen and observed many countries, you will rarely find one so well qualified to digest many travels into one full account. I had begun a letter to you upon the subject of the Collection some months ago, but laid it aside when the alarm of invasion seemed to suspend all literary, and indeed all other, speculation. Should you resume the scheme, I will willingly send you an outline of what seems to me to be the most advisable plan.

". . . . . .

It has occurred to me that I could make a good companion to Ellis's very excellent book, under the title of Specimens of the Modern English Poetry, beginning exactly where he leaves off, and following exactly his plan; coming down to the present time, and making death the time where to stop. Two volumes would comprise it, perhaps. Let me know if you like the scheme; it would require more trouble and more *search* than you will be at first aware of, but, with Ellis's work, it would form such a series of arranged selections as no other country can boast. I could do it well, and should do it willingly. If it

should be taken by the public as a supplement, it would be a good speculation. Should you see Coleridge, show him this. I would, of course, affix my name."

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Keswick, Jan. 31. 1804.

"Dear Tom,

"From this uttermost end of the north it will not be easy, or indeed possible, to send anything to the West Indies, except what will go in the compass of a letter; else you should have the Iris's* bundled up for you. . . . . .

My plan for Madoc stands, then, at present, that Longman shall risk all expenses, and share the eventual profits; printing it in quarto, and with engravings, for I am sure the book will sell the better for being made expensive. . . . . Having now cleared off all my Annual Reviewing (oh Tom, such a batch! almost as much as last year's rabble) I am now for a while at full leisure, and of course direct it principally to Madoc, that it may be off my hands, for I should not be willing to leave the world till I have left that in a fair state behind me. I am now finishing the 14th section. . . . . .

They tell me that Walter Scott has reviewed Amadis

* A Norwich newspaper, edited by Mr. William Taylor.

in the Edinburgh Review; to what purport I know not, but probably a favourable one, if it be his doing, for he is a man whose taste accords with mine, and who, though we have never seen each other, knows that I respect him, as he, on his part, respects me. The same friendly office has been performed in the Critical at last for Thalaba, by William Taylor—this, too, I have not seen.

"As for politics, Tom, we that live among the mountains, as the old woman said, do never hear a word of news. This talk of war with Spain I do not believe, and I am at last come round to the opinion that no invasion is intended, but that the sole object of Bonaparte is to exhaust our finances. Booby! not remembering that a national bankruptcy, while it ruins individuals, makes the state rich.

. . . . . How long the present Duncery may go on, God knows; I am no enemy to them, for they mean well, but in this broil with the Volunteers they are wrong, and dangerously wrong as regards their own popularity. I wish every Volunteer would lay down his arms,—being fully persuaded that in case of necessity he would take them up again;—but this attempt to increase the system of patronage, by depriving them of their covenanted right of electing their own officers, is rascally and abominable. The elections universally made, show that the choice always falls upon men who have either the claim of property, character, or talents. Of more permanent political importance will be a circumstance of which there is no talk of at all. Inquiries are making into the actual state of the poor in England, an office has

been established for the purpose, and the superintendence, by Rickman's recommendation, assigned to Poole, Coleridge's friend, of whom you must have heard me speak,—a man of extraordinary powers, more akin in mind to Rickman than any man I know. This is a very gratifying circumstance to me, to see so many persons, with whom I became acquainted before the world did, rising in the world to their proper stations.

"God bless you!

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Amelia.

"Feb. 11. 1804.

"Dear Tom,

"It is not possible that my letters can give you more pleasure than yours give me. You have always reason to suppose that all is well with me when you hear nothing to the contrary. I am only exposed to the common accidents of life, but you are in the way of battle and slaughter, pestilence and hurricanes, and every letter that arrives from you relieves me from a certain kind of apprehension. . . .
As this letter was not finished at a heat, it has lain two or three weeks; to own the truth fairly, I had such a fear about me of the yellow fever, because you mentioned indisposition on the night preceding the date of your last, that I had not heart to go on with

it. Once I received a letter from a poor fellow three months after he was dead,—it excited a most painful feeling; and it is little less unpleasant to address one to a person whom you fear may not be among the living. However, yours of Dec. 4. has just come to hand. You do not tell me whether the fever is out of the ship; but I conclude it must almost have done its work, and will go out like a fire when it no longer finds anything it can destroy. I have a sort of theory about such diseases which I do not understand myself, but somebody or other will, some of these days. They are so far analogous to vegetables as that they take root, grow, ripen, and decay. Those which are eruptive, blossom and seed; for the pustule of the small-pox, &c. is, to all intents and purposes, the flower of the disease, or the fructification by which it is perpetuated. Now these diseases, like vegetables, choose their own soil,—some plants like clay, others sand, others chalk; so the yellow fever will not take root in a negro, nor the yaws in a white man. There is a hint for a new theory; you will see the truth of the analogy at once, and I can no more explain it than you can, but so it is. . . . . .

We have been dreadfully shocked here by the fate of Wordsworth's brother, captain of the Abergavenny East Indiaman, which has just been lost in Portland Bay; almost as shocking as the Halsewell—300 lives. . . . . .

Bonaparte wants peace; a continental war is a far more probable event. What will become of Portugal, heaven knows; and till that be decided, I can as

little tell what will become of me. Meantime I shall continue to work hard and to economise.

"God bless you!

Yours very affectionately,

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Greta Hall, Feb. 16, 1804.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"I have seen a sight, more dreamy and wonderful, than any scenery that fancy ever yet devised for Faeryland. We had walked down to the lake side; it was a delightful day, the sun shining, and a few white clouds hanging motionless in the sky. The opposite shore of Derwentwater consists of one long mountain, which suddenly terminates in an arch, thus ⌣, and through that opening you see a long valley between mountains, and bounded by mountain beyond mountain; to the right of the arch the heights are more varied and of greater elevation. Now, as there was not a breath of air stirring, the surface of the lake was so perfectly still, that it became one great mirror, and all its waters disappeared; the whole line of shore was represented as vividly and steadily as it existed in its actual being—the arch, the vale within, the single houses far within the vale, the smoke from their chimneys, the farthest hills, and the shadow and substance joined at their bases so indivisibly, that you could make no separation even in your judgment. As I stood on the shore, heaven and the clouds seemed

lying under me; I was looking down into the sky, and the whole range of mountains, having one line of summits under my feet, and another above me, seemed to be suspended between the firmaments. Shut your eyes and dream of a scene so unnatural and so beautiful. What I have said is most strictly and scrupulously true; but it was one of those happy moments that can seldom occur, for the least breath stirring would have shaken the whole vision, and at once unrealised it. I have before seen a partial appearance, but never before did, and perhaps never again may, lose sight of the lake entirely; for it literally seemed like an abyss of sky before me, not fog and clouds from a mountain, but the blue heaven spotted with a few fleecy pillows of cloud, that looked placed there for angels to rest upon them.

"I am treating with my bookseller to publish a supplementary or companion work to Ellis's Specimens, beginning where he leaves off, and coming down to the present time, exclusive of the living poets, so that my work, with his, should contain a brief notice of all the English poets, good, bad, and indifferent, with specimens of each, except the dramatic writers. If this take place, it will cost me a journey to London, and a month's hard work there; the main part can be done here. You know Ellis's book, of course, and if you do not Nicholl can show it you (who, by the by, will go to the devil for charging half-a-guinea a volume for it, unless he can send Ellis instead). Now, if I should make this work, of which there is little doubt, you may, if so disposed, give me an opportunity of acknowledging

my obligations for assistance to my friend Mr. G. C. Bedford, in the preface, and perhaps find some amusement in the task. So tell me your lordship's pleasure, and I will prescribe to you what to do for me; and if you shall rouse yourself to any interest in the pursuit, it may prove really a good prescription. By doing something to assist me, you may learn to love some pursuit for yourself.

"With what can Isaac Reid have filled his one-and-twenty volumes? Comments upon Shakspeare seem to keep pace with the National Debt, and will at last become equally insufferable and out of fashion; yet I should like to see his book, and would buy it if I could. There must be a mass of English learning heaped together, and his Biog. Dramatica is so good a work that I do not think old age can have made him make a bad one; besides, this must have been the work or amusement of his life. . . . . .

"I live almost as recluse a life as my neighbour, the Bassenthwaite Toad, whose history you have seen in the newspapers; only if he finds it dull I do not, for I have books, and port wine, and a view from my window. I feel as much pleasure in having finished my reviewing, as ever I did at school when my Bible exercise was done; and what sort of pleasure that was you may judge, by being told that one of the worst dreams that ever comes athwart my brain is, that I have those Latin verses to make. I very often have this dream, and it usually ends in a resolution to be my own master, and not make verses, and not stay any longer at school, because I am too old. It is odd that school never comes pleasantly in

my dreams; it is always either thus, or with a notion that I cannot find my book to go on with. I never dream of Oxford; perhaps my stay was not long enough to make an impression sufficiently deep.

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Keswick, Friday, Feb. 17. 1804.

"Dear Tom,

"When I remember how many letters I wrote to you on your last West Indies station, and that you never received one of the number, it seems as if this, too, was to be sent upon a forlorn hope. However, I will now number what I send, that you may see if any be missing, and make inquiry for them.

"I have wanted you to help me in weighing anchor for Madoc, and for want of you have been obliged to throw into shade, what else should have been brought out in strong light. Had you been at my elbow, he should have set sail in a very seaman-like manner; if this reaches you, it may yet be in time for you to tell me what I should say to express that the sails are all *ready* for sailing next day. I am afraid *bent* is not the word, and have only put it in just to keep the place, designing to omit it and clap some general phrase in, unless you can help me out in time. The whole first part of the poem is now finished; that is,

as far as Madoc's return to America, 3600 lines; the remaining part will be longer. As my guide once told me in Portugal, we have got half way, for we have come two short leagues, and have two long ones to go; and upon his calculation I am half through the poem.

"Of my own goings on, I know not that there is anything which can be said. Imagine me in this great study of mine from breakfast till dinner, from dinner till tea, and from tea till supper, in my old black coat, my corduroys alternately with the long worsted pantaloons and gaiters in one, and the green shade, and sitting at my desk, and you have my picture and my history. I play with Dapper, the dog, down stairs, who loves me as well as ever Cupid did, and the cat, upstairs, plays with me; for puss, finding my room the quietest in the house, has thought proper to share it with me. Our weather has been so wet, that I have not got out of doors for a walk once in a month. Now and then I go down to the river, which runs at the bottom of the orchard, and throw stones till my arms ache, and then saunter back again. James Lawson, the carpenter, serves me for a Juniper; he has made boards for my papers, and a screen, like those in the frame, with a little shelf to hold my ivory knife, &c., and is now making a little table for Edith, of which I shall probably make the most use. I rouse the house to breakfast every morning, and qualify myself for a boatswain's place by this practice; and thus one day passes like another, and never did the days appear to pass so fast. Summer will make a difference. Our neighbour General Peche will

return in May; Harry, also, will come in May. Sir George and Lady Beaumont are expected to visit Mrs. Coleridge. Danvers is to come in the autumn. The Smiths of Bownham (who gave me Hayley's Life of Cowper) will probably visit the Lakes this year, and most likely Duppa will stroll down to see me and the mountains. I am very well—never better. Edith tolerable. God bless you! If you do not henceforward receive a letter by every packet, the fault will not be mine.

R. S."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Greta Hall, Feb. 19. 1804.

"*Parson*-son*, the Piscis Piscium sive Piscissimus, left us to-day. . . . . He is piping-hot from Bristol, and brimful of admiration for Beddoes, who, indeed, seems to have done so much for Mrs. C., that there are good hopes of her speedy recovery. He is in high spirits about the Slave Trade, for the West India merchants will not consent to its suspension for five years, to prevent the importation of hands into the newly conquered islands; and what from that jealousy, and from the blessed success of the St. Domingo negroes, I believe we may hope to see the traffic abolished. . . . . .

"If I were a single man and a Frenchman, I would

* Mr. Clarkson.

go as a missionary to St. Domingo, where a world of good might be done in that way: the climate may be defied by any man in a high state of mental excitement. I know not whether I sent you some curious facts respecting vivaciousness, but I have met with enough to lead to important physiological conclusions, and in particular to explain the sufficiently common fact of sick persons fixing the hour of their death, and living exactly to that time; the simple solution is, that they would else have died *sooner*. In proceeding with my History, I continually find something that leads to interesting speculation: it would, perhaps, be better if there were always some one at hand, to whom I could communicate these discoveries, and who should help me to hunt down the game when started; not that I feel any wish for such society, but still it would at times be useful. It is a very odd, but a marked, characteristic of my mind,—the very nose in the face of my intellect,—that it is either utterly idle, or uselessly active, without its tools. I never enter into any regular train of thought unless the pen be in my hand; they then flow as fast as did the water from the rock in Horeb, but without that wand the source is dry. At these times conversation would be useful. However, I am going on well, never better. The old cerebrum was never in higher activity. I find daily more and more reason to wonder at the miserable ignorance of English historians, and to grieve with a sort of despondency, at seeing how much that has been laid up among the stores of knowledge, has been neglected and utterly forgotten.

"Madoc goes on well; the whole detail of the alteration is satisfactorily completed, and I shall have it ready for the press by Midsummer. I wish it could have been well examined first by you and William Taylor; however, it will be well purged and purified in the last transcription, and shall go into the world, not such as will obtain general approbation now, but such as may content most men to read. I am not quite sure whether the story will not tempt me to have a cross in the title-page, and take for my motto, *In hoc signo.* . . . . .

"If Μακρος Ανθρωπος agrees with me about the Specimens, it will oblige me to go to London. Perhaps we may contrive to meet. . . . . .

"I am sorry, sir, to perceive by your letter that there is a scarcity of writing-paper in London; perhaps, the next time you write, Mr. Rickman or Mr. Poole* will have the goodness to accommodate you with a larger sheet, that you may have the goodness to accommodate me with a longer letter; and if, sir, it be owing to the weakness of your sight that you write so large a hand, and in lines so far apart, there is a very excellent optician, who lives at Charing Cross, where you may be supplied with the best spectacles, exactly of the number which may suit your complaint.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

* Of Nether Stowey, Somersetshire; at that time officially employed in superintending an inquiry into the state of the poor in England and Wales.

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Feb. 1804.

"I am not sorry that you gave Godwin a dressing, and should not be sorry if he were occasionally to remember it with the comfortable reflection '*in vino veritas;*' for, in plain truth, already it does vex me to see you so lavish of the outward and visible signs of friendship, and to know that a set of fellows whom you do not care for and ought not to care for, boast every where of your intimacy, and with good reason, to the best of their understanding. You have accustomed yourself to talk affectionately, and write affectionately, to your friends, till the expressions of affection flow by habit in your conversation, and in your letters, and pass for more than they are worth; the worst of all this is, that your letters will one day rise up in judgment against you (for be sure, that hundreds which you have forgotten, are hoarded up for some Curl or Philips of the next generation), and you will be convicted of a double dealing, which, though you do not design, you certainly do practise. And now that I *am* writing affectionately *more meo*, I will let out a little more. You say in yours to Sara, that you love and honour me; upon my soul I believe you: but if I did not thoroughly believe it before, your saying so is the thing of all things that would make me open my eyes and look about me to see if I were not deceived: perhaps I am too intolerant to these kind of

phrases; but, indeed, when they are true, they may be excused, and when they are not, there is no excuse for them.

"—— was always looking for such things, but he was a foul feeder, and my moral stomach loathes anything like froth. There is a something outlandish in saying them, more akin to a French embrace than an English shake by the hand, and I would have you leave off saying them to those whom you actually do love, that if this should not break off the habit of applying them to indifferent persons, the disuse may at least make a difference. Your feelings go naked, I cover mine with a bear-skin; I will not say that you harden yours by your mode, but I am sure that mine are the warmer for their clothing. . . . . It is possible, or probable, that I err as much as you in an opposite extreme, and may make enemies where you would make friends; but there is a danger that you may sometimes excite dislike in persons of whose approbation you would yourself be desirous. You know me well enough to know in what temper this has been written, and to know that it has been some exertion; for the same habit which makes me prefer sitting silent to offering contradiction, makes me often withhold censure when, perhaps, in strictness of moral duty, it ought to be applied. The medicine might have been sweetened perhaps; but, dear Coleridge, take the simple bitters, and leave the sweetmeats by themselves.

"That ugly-nosed Godwin has led me to this. I dare say he deserved all you gave him; in fact, I have never forgiven him his abuse of William Tay-

lor, and do now regret, with some compunction, that in my reviewal of his Chaucer, I struck out certain passages of well-deserved severity. . . . Two days of S. T. C.'s time given to ——. Another Antonio! If we are to give account for every idle hour, what will you say to this lamentable waste? Or do you expect to have them allowed to you in your purgatory score? . . . . . If he had not married again, I would have still have had some bowels of compassion for him; but to take another wife with the picture of Mary Wollstonecroft in his house! Agh! I am never ashamed of letting out my *dislikes*, however, and, what is a good thing, never afraid; so let him abuse me, and we'll be at war.

"I wish you had called on Longman. That man has a kind heart of his own, and I wish you to think so: the letter he sent me was a proof of it. Go to one of his Saturday evenings; you will see a coxcomb or two, and a dull fellow or two: but you will, perhaps, meet Turner and Duppa, and Duppa is worth knowing; make yourself known to him in my name, and tell him how glad I should be to show him the Lakes. I have some hope, from Rickman's letter, that you may see William Taylor in town; that would give me great pleasure, for I am very desirous that you should meet. For universal knowledge, I believe he stands quite unrivalled; his conversation is a perpetual spring of living water; and then in every relation of life so excellent is he, that I know not any man who, in the circle of his friends, is so entirely and deservedly beloved."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"March 8. 1804.

"I have not the Spanish Gil Blas; such a book exists, but, if I remember rightly, with the suspicious phrase *restored* to the Spaniards, which may imply a retranslation of what they say is translated. Yet it is very likely that the story is originally Spanish, and, indeed, if the Spaniards claim it, I am ready to believe them, they being true men, and Le Sage's being a Frenchman strong reason for suspecting him to be a thief; however, if he has stolen, there can be no doubt that he has tinkered old metal into a better shape, and I should think your time ill employed in Englishing what everybody reads in French.

"And now let me tell you what to do for me, and how to do it.*

"Take half-a-quartain, or a whole one doubled; write as a title the name of the poet in question; then under that, the time or *place* of his birth, when discoverable, and the time of his death. After that, a brief notice of his life and works to the average length of a Westminster theme, as much shorter as his demerits deserve, as much longer as apt anecdotes, or the humour of pointed and rememberable criticism, may tempt your pen. . . . . .

* See p. 260.

Now for a list of those whom I can turn over to your care at once:—

"Henderson — this you will do *con amore.*

"Garrick — Tom D'Urfey — Tom Browne.

"Cary, the author of Chrononhotonthologus — see if his namby-pamby be of suitable brevity; the Biographia and a Biog. Dictionary will be sufficient guides. Lady M. W. Montague, Stephen Duck, — kill off these, and put them by till I see you; and kill them off, the faster the better, that you may fall upon more; for so much labour as you do, so much am I saved, which is very good for both of us, says Dr. Southey.

"Great news at Keswick; a firing heard off the Isle of Man at four o'clock in the morning yesterday! The French are a-coming, a-coming, a-coming — and what care we? We who have eighteen volunteers and an apothecary at their head! Did I ever tell you of De Paddy, one of the 'United,' who was sent to serve on board Tom's ship last war? The first day of his service, he had to carry the plum-pudding for the dinner of his mess, and the Patrician had never seen a plum-pudding before; he came holding it up in triumph, and exclaimed, in perfect ecstasy, 'Och! your sowls! look here! if dis be war, may it never be paice!'

"No time for more; farewell!

R. SOUTHEY."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Greta Hall, March 12. 1804.

"Your going abroad appeared to me so doubtful, or, indeed, so improbable an event, that the certainty comes on me like a surprise, and I feel at once what a separation the sea makes; when we get beyond the reach of mail coaches, then, indeed, distance becomes a thing perceptible. I shall often think, Coleridge, *Quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!* God grant you a speedy passage, a speedy recovery, and a speedy return! I will write regularly and often; but I know by Danvers, how irregularly letters arrive, and at how tedious a time after their date. Look in old Knolles before you go, and read the siege of Malta, it will make you feel that you are going to visit sacred ground. I can hardly think of that glorious defence without tears. . . . . .

"You would rejoice with me were you now at Keswick, at the tidings that a box of books is safely harboured in the Mersey, so that for the next fortnight I shall be more interested in the news of Fletcher* than of Bonaparte. It contains some duplicates of the lost cargo; among them the collection of the oldest Spanish poems, in which is a metrical romance upon the Cid. I shall sometimes want you for a Gothic etymology. Talk of the happiness of

* The name of a Keswick carrier.

getting a great prize in the lottery! What is that to the opening a box of books! The joy upon lifting up the cover, must be something like what we shall feel when Peter the Porter opens the door upstairs, and says, Please to walk in, sir. That I shall never be paid for my labour according to the current value of time and labour, is tolerably certain; but if any one should offer me 10,000*l.* to forego that labour, I should bid him and his money go to the devil, for twice the sum could not purchase me half the enjoyment. It will be a great delight to me in the next world, to take a fly and visit these old worthies, who are my only society here, and to tell them, what excellent company I found them here at the lakes of Cumberland, two centuries after they had been dead and turned to dust. In plain truth, I exist more among the dead than the living, and think more about them, and, perhaps, feel more about them.

Moses has quite a passion for drawing, strong enough to be useful were he a little older. When I visit London, I will set him up in drawing-books. He was made quite happy yesterday by two drawings of Charles Fox, which happened to be in my desk, and to be just fit for him. The dissected map of England gives him his fill of delight, and he now knows the situation of all the counties in England as well as any one in the house, or, indeed, in the kingdom. I have promised him Asia; it is a pity that Africa and America are so badly divided as to be almost useless, for this is an excellent way of learning geography, and I know by experience that

what is so learnt is never forgotten. . . . . You would be amused to see the truly Catholic horror he feels at the Jews, because they do not eat pork and ham, on which account he declares he never will be an old clothes man. Sara is as fond of me as Dapper is, which is saying a good deal. As for Johnny Wordsworth, I expect to see him *walk* over very shortly; he is like the sons of the Anakim. No M. Post yesterday, none to-day; vexatious after the last French news. I should not suppose Moreau guilty; he is too cautious a general to be so imprudent a man.

God bless you!

R. S."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"Greta Hall, March 14. 1804.

"Your departure hangs upon me with something the same effect that the heavy atmosphere presses upon you — an unpleasant thought, that works like yeast, and makes me feel the animal functions going on. As for the manner of your going, you will be on the whole better off than in a king's ship. Now you are your own master; there you would have been a *guest*, and, of course, compelled to tolerate the worst of all possible society, except that of soldier-officers.

"I had hopes of seeing you in London; for almost as soon as Edith is safe in bed, if safe she be (for my life has been so made up of sudden changes, that I

never even mentally look to what is to happen without that if, and the optative *utinam*), — as soon, I say, as that takes place, I shall hurry to town, principally to put to press this book of Specimens, which can only be finished there, for you will stare at the catalogue of dead authors whom I shall have to resurrectionise. This will be a very curious and useful book of mine; how much the worse it will be for your voyage to Malta, few but myself will feel. If it sells, I shall probably make a supplementary volume to Ellis's, to include the good pieces which he has overlooked, for he has not selected well, and, perhaps, to analyse the epics and didactics, which nobody reads. Had I conceived that you would think of transcribing any part of Madoc, you should have been spared the trouble; but, in writing to you, it has always appeared to me better to *write* than to *copy*, the mere babble having the recommendation that it is exclusively your own, and created for you, and in this the feeling of exclusive property goes for something. The poem shall be sent out to you, if there be a chance of its reaching you; but will you not have left Malta by the time a book to be published about New Year's Day can arrive there?

"Had you been with me, I should have talked with you about a preface; as it is, it will be best simply to state, and as briefly as possible, what I have aimed at in my style, and wherein, in my own judgment, I have succeeded or failed. Longman has announced it, in his Cyclopædic List, under the title of an epic poem, which I assuredly shall not affix to it myself; the name, of which I was once over-fond,

has nauseated me, and, moreover, should seem to render me amenable to certain laws which I do not acknowledge.

"If I were at Malta, the siege of that illustrious island should have a poem, and a good one too; and you ought to think about it, for of all sieges that ever has been, or ever will be, it was the most glorious, and called forth the noblest heroism. Look after some modern Greek books, in particular the poem from which the Teseide of Boccaccio and the Knight's Tale are derived; if, indeed, it be not a translation from the Italian. Could you lay hand on some of these old books, and on *old* Italian poetry, by selling them at Leigh and Sotheby's you might almost pay your travels.

"More manuscripts of Davis come down to-day. I have run through his Life of Chatterton, which is flimsy and worthless. I shall *not* advise Longman to print it, and shall *warn* the writer to expunge an insult to you and to myself, which is not to be paid for by his praise. We formed a just estimate of the man's moral stamina, most certainly, and as for mending, I have no hopes of it. The proverb of the silk purse and the sow's ear, comprises my philosophy upon that subject.

"I write rapidly and unthinkingly, to be in time for the post. Why have you not made Lamb declare war upon Mrs. Bare-bald? He should singe her flaxen wig with squibs, and tie crackers to her petticoats till she leapt about like a parched pea, for very torture. There is not a man in the world who could so well revenge himself. The Annual Review

(that is, the first vol.) came down in my parcel to-day. My articles are wickedly misprinted, and, in many instances, made completely nonsensical. If I could write Latin even as I could once, perhaps I should talk to Longman of publishing a collection of the best modern Latin poets; they were *dulli canes* many of them, but a poor fellow who has spent years and years in doing his best to be remembered, does deserve well enough of posterity to be reprinted once in every millenium, and, in fact, there are enough good ones to form a collection of some extent.

God bless you! prays your
Old friend and brother,
R. SOUTHEY.

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, March 30. 1804.

"My dear Rickman,

"Turner wrote to me and complained heavily of Scotch criticism, which he seems to feel too much; such things only provoke me to interject Fool! and Booby! seasoned with the participle damnatory; but as for being vexed at a review — I should as soon be fevered by a flea-bite! I sent him back a letter of encouragement and stimulant praise, for these rascals had so affected him as to slacken his industry. I look upon the invention of reviews to be the worst injury which literature has received since its revival. People formerly took up a book to learn from it, and with a feeling of respectful thankfulness to the man who

had spent years in acquiring that knowledge, which he communicates to them in a few hours; now they only look for faults. Every body is a critic, that is, every reader imagines himself superior to the author, and reads his book that he may censure it, not that he may improve by it.

"You are in great measure right about Coleridge; he is worse in body than you seem to believe, but the main cause lies in his own management of himself, or rather want of management. His mind is in a perpetual St. Vitus's dance — eternal activity without action. At times he feels mortified that he should have done so little; but this feeling never produces any exertion. I will begin to-morrow, he says, and thus he has been all his life-long letting to-day slip. He has had no heavy calamities in life, and so contrives to be miserable about trifles. Poor fellow! there is no one thing which gives me so much pain as the witnessing such a waste of unequalled power. I knew one man resembling him, save that with equal genius he was actually a vicious man.

"If that man had common prudence, he must have been the first man in this country, from his natural and social advantages, and as such, we who knew him and loved him at school used to anticipate him. I learnt more from his conversation than any other man ever taught me, because the rain fell when the young plant was just germinating and wanted it most; and I learnt more morality by his example than any thing else could have taught me, for I saw him wither away. He is dead and buried at the Cape of Good Hope, and has left behind him nothing to keep his memory

alive. A few individuals only remember him with a sort of horror and affection, which just serves to make them melancholy whenever they think of him or mention his name. This will not be the case with Coleridge; the *disjecta membra* will be found if he does not die early: but having so much to do, so many errors to weed out of the world which he is capable of eradicating, if he does die without doing his work, it would half break my heart, for no human being has had more talents allotted.

"Wordsworth will do better, and leave behind him a name, unique in his way; he will rank among the very first poets, and probably possesses a mass of merits superior to all, except only Shakspeare. This is doing much, yet would he be a happier man if he did more.

"I am made very happy by a reinforcement of folios from Lisbon, and I shall feel some reluctance in leaving them, and breaking off work to go for London to a more trifling employment; however, my History is to be considered as the capital laid by — the savings of industry. And you would think me entitled to all the praise industry can merit, were you to see the pile of papers.

Vale!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Greta Hall, March 31. 1804.

Dear Grosvenor,

. . I am bound for London, chiefly to complete these Specimens, and put them to press. Alas! for your unhappy habit of procrastination! 'Don't delay,' you write in your postscript, and this in answer to a letter which had lain above a fortnight in your desk! Here it happens to be of no moment; but you tell me the habit has produced and is producing worse consequences. I would give you advice if it could be of use; but there is no curing those who choose to be diseased. A good man and a wise man may at times be angry with the world, at times grieved for it; but be sure no man was ever discontented with the world if he did his duty in it. If a man of education who has health, eyes, hands, and leisure, wants an object, it is only because God Almighty has bestowed all those blessings upon a man who does not deserve them. Dear Grosvenor, I wish you may feel half the pain in reading this that I do in writing it. . . . . .

"There!

"And what shall I say after this? for this bitter pill will put your mouth out of taste, for whatever insipidities I might have had to offer; only the metaphor reminds me of a scheme of mine, which is to improve cookery by *chemical tuning*, making every dish prepare the palate for that which is to come

next: and this reminds me that I have discovered most poignant and good galvanism in drinking water out of an iron cup, — how far this may improve fermented liquors remains to be experimented; — the next time you see a pump with an iron ladle thereunto appended, stop, though it be on Cornhill, and drink and try.

"I am very happy, having this week received the oldest poem in the Castilian language, and the oldest code of Gothic laws, and a reinforcement of folios besides, containing the history of Portugal, from the Creation down to 1400 A.D. God bless you!

Yours very affectionately,

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"March, 1804.

"Dear Rickman,

"

I have more in hand than Bonaparte or Marquis Wellesley, — digesting Gothic law, gleaning moral history from monkish legends, and conquering India, or rather Asia, with Alboquerque; filling up the chinks of the day by hunting in Jesuit chronicles, and compiling Collectanea Hispanica et Gothica. Meantime Madoc sleeps, and my lucre of gain compilation* goes on at night, when I am fairly obliged to lay history aside, because it perplexes me in my dreams. 'Tis a vile thing to be pestered in sleep

* Specimens of English Poets.

with all the books I have been reading in the day jostled together. God bless you!

R. S.'

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"April 23. 1804.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"I thought to have seen you before this time, and am daily, indeed hourly, in anticipation of being able to say when I set out. You know that I design to take up with me the first part of Madoc, and leave it with the printer. Now have I been thinking that your worship would, perhaps, be not unwilling to stand man-midwife upon the occasion, and be appointed grand plenipotentiary over commas, semi-colons, and periods. My books have all suffered by misprinting. In fact, there is a lurking hope at the bottom of this request, that when you have once been brought into a habit of dealing with the devil on my account, you may be induced to deal with him on your own.

"I shall bring up with me as much towards the Specimens as can be supplied by Anderson's Collection, Cibber's Lives, and an imperfect series of the European Magazine. The names omitted in these may, beyond all doubt, be supplied from the obituary in the Gentleman's Magazine, *alias* the Oldwomania, a work which I have begun to take in here at Keswick, to enlighten a Portuguese student among the mountains, and which does amuse me by its exquisite inanity,

and the glorious and intense stupidity of its correspondents; it is, in truth, a disgrace to the age and the country. My list of names is already long enough to prove, that there will be some difficulty in getting at all the volumes requisite, not that it is or can be a matter of conscience to read through all the dull poetry of every rhymester. The language of vituperation or criticism has not yet been so systematised as to afford terms for every shade of distinction. I had an idea of applying the botanical nomenclature to novels, and dividing them into monogynia, monandria, cryptogamia, &c., but for poems the pun will not hold good.

"'Tis a long way to London! I wish I were on my way, and then shall I wish myself arrived, and then be wishing myself back again; for complete rest, absolute, unprospective, rooted rest, is the great object of my desires. Near London must be my final settlement, unless any happy and unforeseen fortune should enable me to move to the south, and thus take a longer lease of life; in fact, if I could afford the money sacrifice, I would willingly make the other, and keep my History unpublished all my life, that I might pass it in Portugal. Society, connections, native language, — all these are weighty things; but what are they to the permanent and perpetual exhilaration of a climate that not merely prolongs life, but gives you double the life while it lasts? I have actually felt a positive pleasure in breathing there; and even here, in this magnificent spot, the recollection of the Tagus, and the Serra de Ossa, of Coimbra, and its cypresses, and orange

groves, and olives, its hills and mountains, its venerable buildings, and its dear river, of the Vale of Algarve, the little islands of beauty amid the desert of Alentego, and, above all, of Cintra, the most blessed spot in the habitable globe, will almost bring tears into my eyes.

Vale!

R. S."

To Mrs. Southey.

"Palace Yard, May 10. 1804.

"My dear Edith,

"Safe, sound, and rested sufficiently—this is the best information; and if you can send me as complete an 'all's well' in return, heartily glad shall I be to receive it.

"On Friday I dined with . . . . . At six that evening got into the coach; slept at Warrington; breakfasted at Stowe; dined at Birmingham; slept at Stratford-upon-Avon; in the dark we reached that place, so that I could not see Shakspeare's grave, but I will return that road on purpose. At five, on Sunday morning, we arrived in Oxford, and I walked through it at that quiet and delightful hour, and thought of the past and the present. We did not reach London till after five last evening, so that I was forty-eight hours in the coach. I landed at the White Horse Cellar; no coach was to be procured, and I stood in all the glory of my filth beside my trunk, at the Cellar door, in my spencer of the

cut of 1798 (for so long is it since it was made), and my dirty trowsers, while an old fellow hunted out a porter for me; for about five minutes I waited; the whole mob of Park loungers and Kensington Garden buckery, male and female, were passing by in all their finery, and all looked askance on me. Well, off I set at last, and soon found my spencer was the wonderful part of my appearance. I stopped at the top of St. James's Street, just before a group, who all turned round to admire me, pulled it off, and gave it to my dirty porter, and exhibited as genteel a black coat as ever Joe Aikin made. . . . . .

They have inserted my account of Malthus instead of William Taylor's, for which, as you know, I am sorry, and also preferred my account of poor Ritson's romance to one which Walter Scott volunteered. Scott, it seems, has shown his civility by reviewing Amadis here and in the Edinburgh, which I had rather he had left alone; for, though very civil, and in the right style of civility, he yet denies my conclusion respecting the author, without alleging one argument, or shadow of argument, against the positive evidence adduced. . . . . .

Bard Williams is in town, so I shall shake one honest man by the hand, whom I did not expect to see.

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Mrs. Southey.

"My dear Edith,

"A. Aikin had need send me certain complimentary sugar-plums; he has cut out some of my bitterest and best sentences, and has rejected my reviewal of hi father's Letters on the English Poets, to make roon for something as Bare-bald* as the book itself. How ever, no wonder; there must be a commander-in-chief and the Annual Review has at least as good, or better than either army, navy, or government in England.

"You should have seen my interview with Hyde I was Eve, he the tempter; could I resist Hyde' eloquence? A coat, you know, was predetermined but my waistcoat was *shameful.* I yielded; an yielded also to a calico under-waistcoat, to give th *genteel fulness* which was requisite. This was not all Hyde pressed me further; delicate patterns for pan taloons,—they make gaiters of the same; it woul not soil, and it would wash. I yielded, and am to morrow to be completely hyded in coat, waistcoat under-waistcoat, pantaloons, and gaiters; and shal go forth, like ——, conquering and to conquer. I Mrs. —— should see me! and in my new hat—fo I have a new hat—and my new gloves. O Jozé! I will show myself to Johnny Cockbain† for the benefi of the North. Davy talks of going to the Lakes witl Sir G. Beaumont, probably, and, in that case, soon

* See page 276. † A Keswick tailor.

Elmsley talks of going in the autumn, and wishes me to accompany him to Edinburgh. Wynn wants me in Wales, and would fetch me. I cannot be in two places at once, and must not be cut in half, for to Solomon's decision I have an objection. . .

. . . . . .

I shall desire A. Aikin, my commander, to ship me down a huge cargo, that I may get at least fifty pounds for next year, and look to that for a supply in April. In the foreign one which he proposes, I will not take any active part; it will take more time, and yield less money in proportion. The whole article upon Peter Bayley is in, in all its strength. . . . .

I perfectly long to be at home again, and home I will be at the month's end, God willing, for business *shall not* stand in my way. I will do all that is possible next week and the beginning of the following, and then lay such a load upon Dapple's back as he never trudged under before; he shall work, a lazy, long-eared animal, he shall work, or the printer's devil shall tease him out of his very soul.* . . .

"Dear Edith, how weary I am! God bless you!

R. S."

* These kind intentions refer to the Specimens of the English Poets, and were directed toward Mr. Bedford, who had long borne very patiently the flattering appellation here given him.

To Mrs. Southey.

"London, May, 1804.

". . . . . .

The Thames is ebbing fast before the window, and a beautiful sight it is, dear Edith; but I wish I were upon the banks of the Greta! I will not remain an hour longer than can be helped. You have no notion of the intolerable fatigue it is to walk all day and not get to bed till after midnight. . . . . .

I have lost a grand triumph over you, Edith. Had you seen me in my Hyde, when I tried it, you would never have sent me to a London hyde-maker again. The sleeves are actually as large as the thighs of my pantaloons, and cuffs to them like what old men wear in a comedy. I am sure, if I were a country farmer, and caught such a barebones as myself in such a black sack, I would stick him up for a scarecrow.

"I saw Longman yesterday, who was very glad to see me. I am trying to make him publish a collection of the scarce old English poets, which will be the fittest thing in the world for Lamb to manage, if he likes it; or, perhaps, to manage with my co-operation. The Amadis sells not amiss; the edition, they say, will go off. Thalaba goes off slowly, but is going. They got me W. Taylor's review, which is very characteristic of his style, talents, and good-will for the author. I will bring down the number.

. . . . . .

"On Thursday Carlisle gives me a dinner. There must be one day for Turner; and as for all my half

a thousand acquaintances, they may ask till they are blind, for I won't go. I might live all the year here, by being invited out as a show, but I will not show myself. I write you very unsatisfactory letters, dear Edith, but you know how like a bear with a sore head this place makes me; and never was I more uncomfortable in it, though with a pleasanter house over my head than ever, and better company.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, June 6. 1802.

"Dear Rickman,

"Here I am at length, at least all that remains of me,—the skin and bones of Robert Southey. Being now at rest, and, moreover, egregiously hungry, the flesh which has been expended in stage-coaches and in London streets, will soon be replaced. *Dulce est actorum meminisse — laborum* will not so fully conclude the line as my meaning wishes. Labour enough I had; but there are other things besides my labour in London to be remembered, — more pleasurable in themselves, but not making such pleasurable recollections, because they are to be wished for again.

"However, I found excellent society awaiting me at home;—Florian de Ocampo and Ambrosio Novales,—thirteen of the little quartos, bringing down Spanish history to the point where Prudencio de

Sandoval takes it up, and where I also begin the full tide of my narration. Novales was the correspondent of Reserdius, into whose work you once looked, and was, like him, an excellent Latinist, and a patient, cautious, martyr-murdering antiquary, an excellent weeder of lies wherever they were to be found. In company with these came the four folios of the Bibliotheca Hispanica; there is affixed a portrait of the late King, so exquisitely engraved and so exquisitely ugly, that I know not whether it be most honourable to Spain to have advanced so far in the arts, or disgraceful to have exercised them upon such a fool's pate. I am sure Duppa will laugh at his Catholic Majesty, but whether an interjection of admiration at the print, or the laugh (which is the next auxiliary part of speech to the ohs and ahs, interjections), will come first, is only to be decided by experiment.

. . . . . .

"You will read the Mabinogion, concerning which I ought to have talked to you. In the last, that most odd and Arabian-like story of the Mouse, mention is made of a begging scholar, that helps to the date; but where did the Kimbri get the imagination that could produce such a tale! That enchantment of the bason hanging by the chain from heaven, is in the wildest spirit of the Arabian Nights. I am perfectly astonished that such fictions should exist in Welsh: they throw no light on the origin of romance, every thing being utterly dissimilar to what we mean by that term; but they do open a new world of fiction; and if the date of their language be fixed about the twelfth or thirteenth century, I cannot but think the

mythological substance is of far earlier date, very probably brought from the east by some of the first settlers or conquerors. If William Owen will go on and publish them, I have hopes that the world will yet reward him for his labours. Let Sharon* make his language grammatical, but not alter their idiom in the slightest point. I will advise him about this, being about to send him off a parcel of old German or Theotistic books of Coleridge's, which will occasion a letter.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To S. T. Coleridge, Esq.

"June 11. 1804, Keswick.

"Dear Coleridge,

"The first news of you was from Lamb's letter, which arrived when I was in London. I saw, also, your letter to Stuart, and heard of one to Tobin, before I returned and found my own. Ere this you are at Malta. What an infectious thing is irregularity! Merely because it was uncertain when a letter could set off, I have always yielded to the immediate pressure of other employment; whereas, had there been a day fixed for the mail, to have written would then have been a fixed business, and performed like an engagement.

"All are well — Sara and Sariola, Moses and Justiculus, Edith and the Edithling. Mary is better.

* Sharon Turner, Esq.

"I was worn to the very bone by fatigue in London,—more walking in one day than I usually take in a month; more waste of breath in talking than serves for three months' consumption in the country; add to this a most abominable cold, affecting chest, head, eyes, and nose. It was impossible to see half the persons whom I wished to see, and ought to have seen, without prolonging my stay to an inconvenient time, and an unreasonable length of absence from home. I called upon Sir George* unsuccessfully, and received a note that evening, saying he would be at home the following morning; then I saw him, and his lady, and his pictures, and afterwards met him the same day at dinner at Davy's. As he immediately left town, this was all our intercourse; and, as it is not likely that he will visit the Lakes this year, probably will be all.

"I went into the Exhibition merely to see your picture, which perfectly provoked me. Hazlitt's does look as if you were on your trial, and certainly had stolen the horse; but then you did it cleverly,—it had been a deep, well-laid scheme, and it was no fault of yours that you had been detected. But this portrait by Northcote looks like a grinning idiot; and the worst is, that it is just like enough to pass for a good likeness, with those who only know your features imperfectly. Dance's drawing has that merit at least, that nobody would ever suspect you of having been the original. Poole's business will last yet some weeks. As the Abstract is printed, I can give

* Sir George Beaumont.

you the very important result: one in eight throughout Great Britain receives permanent parish pay*;—what is still more extraordinary, and far more consolatory, one in nine is engaged in some benefit society,—a prodigious proportion, if you remember that, in this computation, few women enter, and no children.

"I dined with Sotheby, and met there Henley, a man every way to my taste. Sotheby was very civil, and as his civility has not that smoothness so common among the vagabonds of fashion, I took it in good part. He is what I should call a clever man. Other lions were Price, the picturesque man, and Davies Giddy, whose face ought to be perpetuated in marble for the honour of mathematics. Such a forehead I never saw. I also met Dr. —— at dinner; who, after a long silence, broke out into a discourse upon the properties of the conjunction *Quam*. Except his quamical knowledge, which is as profound as you will imagine, he knows nothing but bibliography, or the science of title-pages, impresses, and dates. It was a relief to leave him, and find his brother, the captain, at Rickman's, smoking after supper, and letting out puffs at the one corner of his mouth and puns at the other. The captain hath a son,—begotten, according to Lamb, upon a mermaid; and thus far is certain, that he is the queerest fish out of water. A paralytic affection in childhood has kept one side of his face stationary, while the other has continued to grow, and the two sides form the most ridiculous whole you

* This seems almost incredible.

can imagine; the boy, however, is a sharp lad, the inside not having suffered.

"William Owen lent me three parts of the Mabinogion, most delightfully translated into so Welsh an idiom and syntax, that such a translation is as instructive (except for etymology) as an original. I was, and am, still utterly at a loss to devise by what possible means, fictions so perfectly like the Arabian Tales in character, and yet so indisputably of Cimbric growth, should have grown up in Wales. Instead of throwing light upon the origin of romance, as had been surmised, they offer a new problem, of almost impossible solution. Bard Williams communicated to me some fine arcana of bardic mythology, quite new to me and to the world, which you will find in Madoc. I have ventured to lend Turner your German Romances, which will be very useful to him, and which will be replaced on your shelves before your return, and *used*, not *abused**, during your absence. I also sent him the Indian Bible, because I found him at the Indian grammar, for he is led into etymological researches. That is a right worthy and good man; and, what rarely happens, I like his wife as well as I do him. Sir, all the literary journals of England will not bring you more news than this poor sheet of Miss Crosthwaite's letter-paper. I have proposed to Longman to publish a collection of the scarcer and better old poets, beginning with Pierce Ploughman, and to print a few only

* This was a gentle hint to Mr. Coleridge, who valued books none the less for being somewhat ragged and dirty, and did not take the same scrupulous care as my father to prevent their becoming so.

at a high price, that they may sell as rarities. This he will determine upon in the autumn. If it be done, my name must stand to the prospectus, and Lamb shall take the job and the emolument, for whom, in fact, I invented it, being a fit thing to be done, and he the fit man to do it.

"The Annual Review succeeds beyond expectation; a second edition of the first volume is called for. Certain articles respecting the Methodists and Malthus are said to have contributed much to its reputation. By the by, that fellow has had the impudence to marry, after writing upon the miseries of population. In the third volume I shall fall upon the Society for the Suppression of Vice.

"Thus far had I proceeded yesterday, designing to send off the full sheet by that night's post, when Wordsworth arrived, and occasioned one day's delay. I have left him talking to Moses, and mounted to my own room to finish. What news, you will wish to ask, of Keswick? The house remains *in statu quo*, except that the little parlour is painted, and papered with cartridge-paper. Workmen to plaster this room could not be procured when Jackson sent for them, and so unplastered it is likely to remain another winter. A great improvement has been made by thinning the trees before the parlour window,—just enough of the lake can be seen through such a framework, and such a fretted canopy of foliage as to produce a most delightful scene, and utterly unlike any other view of the same subject. The Lakers begin to make their appearance, though none have, as yet, reached us. But Sharpe has announced his approach

in a letter to W. We are in hourly expectation of Harry; and in the course of the year I expect Duppa to be my guest, and probably Elmsley.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"June 27. 1804, Keswick.

"'Tis a heartless thing, dear Tom, to write from this distance, and at this uncertainty, — the more so when I recollect how many letters of mine were sent to the West Indies when you were last there, which never reached you. Two packets, say the papers, have been taken; and if so, two of my epistles are now deeper down than your sounding-lines have ever fathomed,—unless, indeed, some shark has swallowed and digested bags and bullets. We are uneasy at receiving no letter since that which announced your arrival at Barbadoes. I conceived you were at the Surinam expedition, and waited for the Gazette to-day with some unavoidable apprehensions. It has arrived, and I can find no trace of the Galatea, which, though so far satisfactory, as that it proves you have not been killed by the Dutchman, leaves me, on the other hand, in doubt what has become of you and your ship. . . .

"About the changes in the Admiralty, I must tell you a good thing of W. T. in the Isis; he said it was grubbing up English oak, and planting Scotch fir in

its place, for the use of the navy. An excellent good thing! If, however, I am not pleased that Lord Melville should be in, I am heartily glad that his predecessor is out, for no man ever proved himself so utterly unfit for the post. Our home politics are become very interesting, and must ultimately lead to the strongest administration ever seen in England. Pitt has played a foolish game in coming in alone; it has exasperated the Prince, who is the rising sun to look to, and is playing for the regency.

"The Lakers and the fine weather have made their appearance together. As yet we have only seen Sharpe, whose name I know not if you will remember; he is an intimate of Tuffin, or Muffin, whose name you cannot forget; and, like him, an excellent talker; knowing every body, remembering every thing, and having strong talents besides. Davy is somewhere on the road; he is recovering from the ill effects of fashionable society, which had warped him. Rickman told me his mind was in a healthier tone than usual, and I was truly rejoiced to find it so. Wordsworth came over to see me on my return, and John Thelwall, the lecturer on elocution, dined with us on his travels. But the greatest event of Greta Hall is, that we have had a jack of two-and-twenty pounds, which we bought at threepence a pound. It was caught in the Lake with a hook and line. We drest it in pieces, like salmon, and it proved, without exception, one of the finest fish I had ever tasted; so if ever you catch such a one, be sure you boil it instead of roasting it in the usual way. I am in excellent good health, and have got rid of my sore eyes, — for how

long God knows. The disease, it seems, came from Egypt, and is in some mysterious manner contagious, so that we have naturalised another curse.

"Madoc is in the printer's hands — Ballantyne, of Edinburgh, who printed the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, — if you remember the book. Next week I expect the first proof. Do not be frightened to hear after this that I have not done a stroke further in correcting and filling up the MSS. since my return. Reviewing is coming round again; I have a parcel upon the road, and groan in spirit at the prospect; not but of all trades it is the least irksome, and the most like my own favourite pursuits, which it certainly must, in a certain degree, assist, as well as, in point of time, retard. There is much of mine in the second volume *, and of my best; some of which you will discover, and some perhaps not. A sixth of the whole is mine; — pretty hard work. I get on bravely with my History, and have above three quarto volumes done, — quartos as they ought to be, of about 500 *honest* pages each. It does me good to see what a noble pile my boards make.

"My dog Dapper is as fond of me as ever Cupid was; this is a well-bred hound of my landlord's, who never fails to leap upon my back when I put my nose out of doors, and who, never having ventured beyond his own field till I lately tempted him, is the most prodigious coward you ever beheld; he almost knocked Edith down in running away from a pig: but I like him, for he is a worthy dog, and frightens

* Of the Annual Review.

the sauntering Lakers as much as the pig frightened him.

"The Scotch reviewers are grown remarkably civil to me; partly because Elmsley was, and partly because Walter Scott is, connected with them. My Amadis and the Chatterton have been noticed very respectfully there. I told you in my last that Amadis sold well — as much in one year as Thalaba in three! But I feel, and my booksellers feel, that I am getting on in the world, and the publication of Madoc will set me still higher.

"How goes on the Spanish? keep to it by all means; for it is not an impossible nor an improbable thing that you and I may one day meet in Portugal; and, if so, take a journey together. You will then find it useful; for it turns readily into Portuguese. My uncle and I keep up a pretty regular intercourse. I am trying to set his affairs here in order. A cargo of books value about eleven pounds, which were lost for twelve months, have been recovered, and I am feeding upon them. God bless you, Tom! lose no opportunity of writing. Edith's love.

R. S."

CHAPTER XI.

FAMILY DETAILS.—POLITICS.—HE WISHES TO EDIT SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S WORKS — DR. VINCENT. — THE WEST INDIES. — SPANISH WAR. — WISHES TO GO TO PORTUGAL WITH SIR JOHN MOORE — USE OF REVIEWING. — EARLY POEMS, WHY WRITTEN. — TRAVELS IN ABYSSINIA. — STEEL MIRRORS. — SIR W. SCOTT'S NEW POEM. — MADOC. — THE COMPASS, WHEN FIRST USED. — THE DIVING BELL. — USES OF PRINTING. — CHANGES IN THE CRITICAL REVIEW. — LOSS OF THE ABERGAVENNY.—ENDOWMENT OF THE ROMISH CHURCH IN IRELAND. — TRANSLATION FROM THE LATIN. — REASONS FOR NOT GOING TO LONDON. — ENGLISH POETRY. — PUBLICATION OF MADOC. — DUTY UPON FOREIGN BOOKS A GREAT HARDSHIP. — STORY OF PELAYO. — THE BUTLER. — MADOC CRITICISED AND DEFENDED.— REVIEWING. — LITERARY REMARKS.—LORD SOMERVILLE. — SUGGESTION TO HIS BROTHER THOMAS TO COLLECT INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEST INDIES. — THE MORAVIANS. — VISIT TO SCOTLAND AND TO SIR W. SCOTT AT ASHIESTIEL. — REVIEWALS OF MADOC. — ESTRIELLA'S LETTERS.

To Lieutenant Southey, H. M. S. Galatea.

"Greta Hall, July 30. 1804.

"Dear Tom,

"Your three letters have arrived all together this evening, and have relieved me from very considerable anxiety. Mine I find are consigned to the Atlantic without bottles; and three books of Madoc,

which Edith copied in them, gone to edify the sharks—gentlemen who will digest them far more easily than the critics. However, there must be yet some other letters on the way, and I trust you will have learnt before this can reach you that I have two Ediths in the family, — the Edithling (who was born on the last of April) continuing to do well, only that I am myself somewhat alarmed at that premature activity of eye and spirits, and those sudden startings, which were in her poor sister the symptoms of a dreadful and deadly disease. However, I am on my guard. . . . . I did not mean to trust my affections again on so frail a foundation, — and yet the young one takes me from my desk and makes me talk nonsense as fluently as you perhaps can imagine.

"Both Edith and I are well; indeed, I have weathered a rude winter, and a ruder spring, bravely. Harry is here, and has been here about three weeks, and will remain till the end of October. He is a very excellent companion, and tempts me out into the air and the water when I should else be sitting at home. We have made our way well in the world, Tom, thus far, and by God's help we shall yet get on better. Make your fortune, and Joe may yet live to share its comforts, as he stands upon his Majesty's books in my name, though degraded by the appellation of mongrel. Madoc is in a Scotch press, — Ballantyne's, who printed the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders, — a book which you may remember I bought at Bristol.

"You ask of Amadis: it has been well reviewed,

both in the Annual and Edinburgh, by Walter Scott, who in both has been very civil to me. Of all my later publications, this has been the most successful, — more than 500 of the 1000 having sold within the year, so that there is a fair chance of the 50*l.* dependent upon the sale of the whole. Thalaba has been very admirably reviewed in the Critical, by William Taylor; but it does not sell, and will not for some years reach a second edition. Reviewing is coming round again! one parcel arrived! another on the road! a third ready to start! I grudge the time thus to be sold, sorely; but patience! it is, after all, better than pleading in a stinking court of law, — or being called up at midnight to a patient; it is better than being a soldier or a sailor; better than calculating profits and loss on a counter; better, in, short than anything but independence.

"July is, indeed, a lovely month at the Lakes, and so the Lakers seem to think, for they swarm here. We have been much interrupted by visiters; among others, young Roscoe; and more are yet to come. These are not the only interruptions; we have been, or rather are, manufacturing black currant jam for my uncle, and black currant wine for ourselves, — Harry and I chief workmen, — pounding them in a wooden bowl with a great stone, as the acid acts upon a metal mortar. We have completed a great work in bridging the river Greta at the bottom of the orchard, by piling heaps of stones so as to step from one to another, — many a hard hour's sport, half knee-deep in the water. Davy has been here — stark mad for angling. This is our history:

— yours has been busier. As for news, the packet which conveys this will convey later intelligence than it is in my power to communicate. Sir Francis may, and probably will, lose his election; but it is evident he has not lost his popularity. Pitt will go blundering on till every body, by miserable experience, think him what I always did. . . . . Whensoever the great change of ministry, to which we all look on with hope, takes place, I shall have friends in power able to serve me, and shall, in fact, without scruple apply to Fox through one or two good channels: this may be very remote, and yet may be very near. When Madoc is published, I mean to send Fox a copy, with such a note as may be proper for me to address to such a man. . . . . .

"God bless you, Tom! it grows late, and I have two proofs to correct for to-night's post. Once more, God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieutenant Southey, H.M.S. Galatea.

"Keswick, Sept. 12. 1804.

"Dear Tom,

"It is a heartless and hopeless thing, to write letter after letter, when there seems so little probability of their ever reaching you. How is it that all your letters seem to find me, and none of mine to find you? I cannot comprehend. I write, and write, and write, always directing Bar-

badoes or elsewhere, and suppose that, according to direction, they go anywhere elsewhere than to the Galatea.

"My intention is, God willing, to remain here another year, and in the autumn of 1805 to go once more to Lisbon, and there remain one, two, or three years, till my History be well and effectually completed. Meantime these are my employments: to finish the correcting and printing of Madoc; to get through my annual work of reviewing; and bring my History as far onward as possible. In the press I have, 1. Metrical Tales and other Poems; being merely a corrected republication of my best pieces from the Anthology. 2. Specimens of the later English Poets, *i. e.* of all who have died from 1685 to 1800; this is meant as a supplement to George Ellis's Specimens of the Early Poets,—a book which you may remember at Bristol; it will fill two vols. in crown octavo, the size of Ritson's Engleish Romanceès, if you recollect them. 3. Madoc, in quarto, whereof twenty-two sheets are printed; one more finishes the first part.

"Harry has been here since the beginning of July, and will yet remain about six weeks longer. We mountaineerify together, and bathe together, and go on the Lake together, and have contrived to pass a delightful summer. I am learning Dutch, and wish you were here to profit by the lessons at the breakfast-table, and to mynheerify with me, as you like the language; my reason for attaining the language is, that as the Dutch conquered, or rather destroyed, the Portuguese empire in Asia, the history of the

downfall of that empire is, of course, more fully related by Dutch than by Portuguese historians.

"You ask for politics. I can tell you little. The idea of invasion still continues the same humbug and bugbear as when it was first bruited abroad, to gull the people on both sides of the water. Bonaparte dares not attempt it — would to God he did! — defeat would be certain, and his ruin inevitable: as it is, he must lose reputation by threatening what he cannot execute; and I believe that the Bourbons will finally be restored. At home, politics look excellently well; the coalition of Fox and the Grenvilles has been equally honourable to all parties, and produced the best possible effects, in rooting out the last remains of that political violence which many years so divided the country. The death of the King, or another fit of madness, which is very probable; or his abdication, which most persons think would be very proper; or the declining health of Pitt, or the actual strength of the Opposition, — are things of which every one is very likely to bring the Coalition into power, and in that case neither you nor I should want friends. So live in hope, as you have good cause to do. Steer clear of the sharks and the land-crabs, and be sure that we shall both of us one day be as well off as we can wish.

"The H———'s are visiting Colonel Peachy, whose wife was also of Bishop Lydiard, — a Miss Charter; both she and her sister knew you well by name. We are getting upon excellently good terms; for they are very pleasant and truly womanly women, which is the best praise that can be bestowed upon a woman. Will you not laugh to hear that I have

actually been employed all the morning in making arrangements for a subscription ball at Keswick? — I! — very I! — your brother, R. S.! To what vile purposes may we come! It was started by Harry and Miss Charter at the theatre (for we have a strolling company at an alehouse here), and he and I and General Peche have settled it; and all Cumberland will now envy the gaieties of Keswick. Mrs. General insisted upon my opening the ball with her. I advised her, as she was for performing impossibilities, to begin with turning the wind, before she could hope to turn me: so I shall sip my tea, and talk with the old folks some hour or so, and then steal home to write Madoc, drink my solitary glass of punch, and get to bed at a good Christian-like hour, — as my father, and no doubt his father, did before me. Oh Tom, that you were but here! for in truth we lead as pleasant a life as heart of man could wish. I have not for years taken such constant exercise as this summer. Some friend or acquaintance or other is perpetually making his appearance, and out then I go to lacquey them on the lake, or over the mountains. — I shall get a character for politeness!

"I have so far altered my original plan of the History, as to resolve upon not introducing the life of St. Francisco, and the chapters therewith connected, but to reserve them for a separate history of Monachism, which will make a very interesting and amusing work; a good honest quarto may comprise it. My whole historical labours will then consist of three separate works. 1. Hist. of Portugal, — the European part, 3 vols. 2. Hist. of the Portuguese

Empire in Asia, 2 or 3 vols. 3. Hist. of Brazil. 4. Hist. of the Jesuits in Japan. 5. Literary History of Spain and Portugal, 2 vols. 6. Hist. of Monachism. In all, ten, eleven, or twelve quarto volumes; and you cannot easily imagine with what pleasure I look at all the labour before me. God give me life, health, eyesight, and as much leisure as even now I have, and done it shall be. God bless you!

R. S."

To Messrs. Longman and Rees.

"Keswick, Nov. 11. 1804.

"Dear Sirs,

. . . . . .

— should like to edit the works of Sir Philip Sidney, who is, in my judgment, one of the greatest men of all our countrymen. I would prefix a Life, an Essay on the Arcadia, his greatest work, and another on his Metres. It would make three octavo volumes: to the one there should be his portrait prefixed; to the second, a view of Penshurst, his birthplace, and residence; to the third, the print of his death, from Mortimer's well-known etching. Perhaps I overrate the extent of the work; for, if I recollect right, Burton's Anatomy, which is such another folio, was republished in two octavos. His name is so illustrious, that an edition of 500 would certainly sell; the printer might begin in spring. I could write the Essays here; in the autumn I shall most likely be in London, and would then complete

the Life, and the book might be published by Christmas of 1805. If you approve the scheme, it may be well to announce it, as we may very probably be forestalled, for this is the age of editors. I design my name to appear, for it would be a pleasure and a pride to have my name connected with that of a man whom I so highly reverence.

"Mr. Longman promised me a visit in September; I have not found him so punctual as he will always find me.

Believe me,
Yours truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To G. C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 1. 1804.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"Sir Roger L'Estrange is said, in Cibber's Lives, to have written a great number of poetical works, which are highly praised in an extract from Winstanley. *Ubi sunt?* God knows, among all the titles to his works I do not see one which looks as if it belonged to a poem; perhaps Hill or Heber may help you out: but the sure store-house in all desperate cases will be the Museum. He has the credit of having written the famous song 'Cease rude Boreas' when in prison; this, however, is only a tradition, and wants evidence sufficient for our purpose. There, sir, is a pussagorical answer to your pussechism.

If you are in the habit of calling on Vincent, you may do me a service by inquiring whether a MS. of Giraldus Cambrensis, designated by Cave, in his Historia Litteraria, as the Codex Westmonast, be in the Dean and Chapter Library; for this MS. contains a map of Wales as subsisting in his time, and that being the time in which Madoc lived, such a map would form a very fit and very singular addition to the book; and if it be there, I would wish you to make a formal application on my part for permission to have it copied and engraved. These bodies corporate are never very accommodating; but Vincent is bound to be civil on such an occasion, if he can, lest his refusal should seem to proceed from personal dislike, towards one whom he must be conscious that he has used unhandsomely, and to the utmost of his power attempted to injure. God knows I forgive him — *ex imo corde.* I am too well satisfied with my own lot, with my present pursuits, and the new and certain hopes which they present, not to feel thankful, to all those who have in any way contributed to make me what I am. If he and I had been upon friendly terms, it might have interested him, who has touched upon Portuguese history himself, to hear of my progress, and my knowledge might possibly have been of some assistance to him. I have no kindly feelings towards him; he made a merit of never having struck me, whereas that merit was mine for never having given him occasion so to do. It is my nature to be sufficiently susceptible of kindness, and I remember none from him. Here is a long rigmarole about nothing; the remembrance of

old times always makes me garrulous, and the failing is common to most men. . . . .

God bless you!

R. S."

To Lieut. Southey, Barbadoes.

"Keswick, Dec. 26. 1804.

"Dear Tom,

"I have made some use of your letters in the third Annual Review. M'Kinnan has published a Tour through the British West Indies; a decent book, but dull. In reviewing it, I eked out his account with yours, and contrasted his words upon the slave trade with a passage from your letters. In doing this, I could not help thinking what materials for a book you might bring home if you would take the trouble: as thus,—describe the appearance of all the islands you touch at, from the sea, — their towns, how situated, how built, — what public buildings, what sort of houses, — the inside of the houses, how furnished, — what the mode of life of the townspeople, of the planter, in different ranks, and of the different European settlers, — in short, all you see and all you hear, looking about the more earnestly and asking questions. Many anecdotes of this, and the last war, you have opportunities of collecting, particularly of Victor Hughes; something also of St. Domingo, or Hayti, as it must now be called, which I find means *asperosa* in Spanish, *rugged*. If you would bring home matter for a picture of the islands as they now are, I could delineate what they

were from the old Spaniards, and there would be a very curious book between us. . . . .

"Hamilton is broke, whereby I shall lose from 20*l.* to 30*l.*, which he owes me for critical work, and which I shall never get;—rather hard upon one whose brains and eyesight have quite enough to do by choice, and are never overpaid for what they do by necessity. For meaner matter,—my little girl is not pretty; but she is a sweet child, so excellently good-tempered; as joyous as a sky-lark in a fine morning, and so quick of eye, of action, and of intellect, that I have a sad feeling about me of the little chance there is of rearing her; so don't think too much about her.

"Whether this war with Spain will involve one with Portugal is what we are all speculating about at present. I think it very likely that Bonaparte will oblige the Portuguese to turn the English out,—a great evil to me in particular; though should my uncle be driven to England, my settling will the sooner take place. At present I am as unsettled as ever, at a distance from my books, perpetually in want of them, wishing and wanting to be permanently fixed, and still prevented by the old cause. Make a capital prize, Tom, and lend me a couple of hundreds, and you shall see what a noble appearance my books will make. N.B.—I have a good many that wait for your worship to letter them. This Spanish war may throw something in your way; but I don't like the war, and think it is unjust and ungenerous to quarrel with an oppressed people because they have not strength to resist the French.

You know I greatly esteem the Spaniards. As for France, I am willing to pay half my last guinea to support a contest for national honour against him; but it began foolishly, and well will it be if we do not end it even more foolishly than we began.

"God bless you!

R. S."

My father, as the reader is well aware, had long been desirous of again visiting Spain and Portugal, chiefly for the sake of obtaining still further materials for the two great historical works he was engaged upon, — the History of Portugal and the History of Brazil. It seems that Mr. Bedford, through some of his friends, had, at this time, an opportunity of furthering these views, and had inquired of my father what situation he felt himself equal to undertake. His reply explains the rest sufficiently, and the next letter shows that the scheme soon fell to the ground.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 20. 1805.

"Dear Grosvenor,

". . . . . There is a civil office for the inspection of accounts, and I am adequate to be inspector; so, if you cannot learn that there be anything more proper, let that be the thing asked: but consult Rickman. I have only proceeded on newspaper authority; and, if the expedition be not

going to Portugal, would not take the best office any where else. Actual work I expect, and have seen enough of the last army at Lisbon to know that commissaries and inspectors have plenty of leisure. Thus much General Moore must know, whether we are to send forces to Portugal or not; for it depends upon his report, if the papers lie not. If we do, the place where all the civil operations are carried on is Lisbon; there the commissaries, &c. remain if the army takes the field; there I want to go, you know for what purpose. To say that I do not wish to make money would be talking nonsense; but the mere object of making money would not take me from home. I can inspect accounts, I can make contracts (for beef and oats are soon understood), and, doing these, can yet have leisure for my own pursuits. What efforts I make are more because the thing is prudent than agreeable. . . .

"Madoc is provokingly delayed. Job once wished that his enemy had written a book; if he himself had printed one, it would have tried his patience. I am every day expecting the Great Snake * in a frank from Duppa. My emblem of the cross, prefixed to the poem, with the *In hoc signo*, and what I have said in the poem of the Virgin Mary, is more liable to misconstruction than could be wished. In what light I consider these things, may be seen in the reviews of the Missions to Bengal and Otaheite. I have just finished another article for the year upon the South African Missions. The great use of reviewing is, that it obliges me to think upon subjects

* An engraving of one of the incidents in Madoc.

on which I had been before content to have very vague opinions, because there had never been any occasion for examining them; and this is a very important one.

"It will do me a world of good to see the first proof-sheet under favour of the Grand Parleur; I shall begin to think seriously of the preface. You will find it worth while to go to Longman, for the sake of seeing the new publications, which all lie on his table; a good way of knowing what is going on in the world of typography.

God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Feb. 16. 1805.

"Dear Rickman,

"The motto * to those Metrical Tales is strictly true; but there is a history belonging to them which will show that I was not trifling when I wrote them. With the single exception of Gualberto (the longest and best), all the others were written expressly for the Morning Post; and this volume-full is a selection from a large heap, by which I earned 149*l.* 4*s.*, and is now published for the very same reason for which it was originally composed. Besides the necessity for writing such things, there was also a great fitness, inasmuch as, by so doing, a facility and variety of style was acquired, to be converted to better purposes, and I had always better purposes in view.

* I am unable to refer to this edition.

"I have been reading the earliest travels in Abyssinia, namely, the History of the Portuguese Embassy in 1520, by Francisco Alvares, the chaplain; a book exceedingly rare, — my copy, which is the Spanish translation, a little 24mo. volume, having cost a moidore. As I cannot bear to lose anything, I shall draw up just such an abstract as if for a review, and throw whatever is not essential to the main narrative among the works of supererogation, which will be enough for a volume. The king, or, to give him his proper title, the Neguz, dwelt like an Arab in his tent. . . . . What every where surprises me in the history of these discoveries is, that so little should be known of the East in Europe, when so many Europeans were to be found in the East, for the Neguz was never without some straggler or other. Still more that in Europe such idle dreams about Ethiopia should prevail, when Abyssinians so often found their way to Rome. The opportunities lost by foolish ministers and foolish kings makes me swear for pure vexation. If Alboquerque had lived, I verily believe he would have expelled the Mameluke from Egypt, by the help of the African Christians and have made that country a Christian instead of a Turkish conquest. I should like to give Egypt to the Spaniards; they are good colonists. . .

. . . . . .

Do you know that reflecting mirrors of steel were used instead of spectacles for weak or dim-eyed persons to read in? This must have been so troublesome and so expensive that it never can have been common

But that it was used, I have found in an odd book, purchased when I was first your guest in London — the 400 questions proposed by the Admiral of Castille and his friends to a certain Friar Minorita; 1550 the date of the book, some thirty years after it had been written. I am in the middle of this most quaint book, and have found, among the most whimsical things that ever delighted the quaintness of my heart, some of more consequence. . . . . The probabilities of my seeing you this year seem to increase. I begin to think that the mountain may come to Mahomet; in plain English, that, instead of my going to Lisbon, my uncle may come to England, in which case I shall meet him in London. The expedition to Portugal seems given up. Coleridge is confidential secretary to Sir A—— Ball, and has been taking some pains to set the country right as to its Neapolitan politics, in the hope of saving Sicily from the French. He is going with Capt. —— into Greece, and up the Black Sea to purchase corn for the government. Odd, but pleasant enough, — if he would but learn to be contented in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call him — a maxim which I have long thought the best in the Catechism.

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"March 5. 1805.

"Dear Wynn,

"..... I have read Scott's poem* this evening, and like it much. It has the fault of mixed language which you mentioned, and which I expected; and it has the same obscurity, or, to speak more accurately, the same want of perspicuousness, as his Glenfinlas. I suspect that Scott did not write poetry enough when a boy†, for he has little command of language. His vocabulary of the obsolete is ample; but in general his words march up stiffly, like half-trained recruits,—neither a natural walk, nor a measured march which practice has made natural. But I like his poem, for it is poetry, and in a company of strangers I would not mention that it had any faults. The beginning of the story is too like Coleridge's Christobell, which he had seen; the very line, 'Jesu Maria, shield her well!' is caught from it. When you see the Christobel, you will not doubt that Scott has imitated it; I do not think designedly, but the echo was in his ear, not for emulation, but *propter amorem*: This only refers to the beginning, which you will perceive attributes more of magic to the lady than seems in character with the rest of the story.

* The Lay of the Last Minstrel.

† This would seem, from Sir W. Scott's Life, to be true. He mentions, in his Autobiography, having been a great reader of poetry, especially old ballads; but does not speak of having written much, if any, in boyhood.

"If the sale of Madoc should prove that I can afford to write poetry, Kehama will not lie long unfinished. After lying fallow since the end of October, I feel prolific propensities that way. . . . . .

"My book ought to be delivered before this, upon the slowest calculation. I pray you compare the conscientious type of my notes with that of Scott's; and look in his title-page*, at the cruelty with which he has actually split Paternoster Row.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, March 22. 1805.

"I never learnt the Memoria Technica, but if ever I have a son he shall. Where is the earliest mention of the mariner's compass? I have no better reference than a chronological table at the end of a worn-out dictionary, which says, invented or improved by Gioia of Naples, A.D. 1302. Now, I have just found it mentioned in the Laws of Alonso the Wise, which Laws were begun A.D. 1251, and finished in seven years; and it is not mentioned as anything new, but made use of as an illustration. You can understand the Spanish:

"'Assi como les marineros sequian en le nocte, escura por el aguja que les es mediarnera entre la piedra e la estrella, e les muestra por lo vayar.'

* My father used to pride himself upon his *title-pages*, and upon his knowledge of *typography* in general; being, as one of his printers said, the only person he ever knew who could tell how a page would look before it was set up.

"I suspect that this implies a belief in some specific virtue in the north star, as if the magnetic influence flowed from it. This, however, is matter for more inquiry, and I will one day look into it in Raymond Lully and Albertus Magnus,—likely authors. The passage certainly carries the use of the needle half a century further back than the poor chronology; but whether I have made what antiquarians call a discovery, is more than I can tell. Robertson ought to have found it; for to write his introduction to Charles V., without reading these Laws, is one of the thousand and one omissions for which he ought to be called rogue, as long as his volumes last.

"These Partidas, as they are called, are very amusing; I am about a quarter through them some way, as they fill three folios by help of a commentary. They are divided into seven parts, for about seven times seven such reasons as would have delighted Dr. Slop; and King Alfonzo has ingeniously settled the orthography of his name, by beginning each of the seven parts with one of the seven letters which compose it, in succession. His Majesty gives directions that no young princes should dip their fingers into the dish in an unmannerly way, so as to grease themselves; and expatiates on the advantages to be derived from reading and writing,—if they are able to learn those arts. He was himself an extraordinary man; too fond of study to be a good king in a barbarous age,—but therefore not only a more interesting character to posterity, but a more useful one in the long run.

"You will see in the Madociana a story, how

Alexander went down in a diving-bell to see what was going on among the fishes; — remarkable, because it is found in Spanish, German, and *Welsh* romances of the middle ages. I have since found a similar story of somebody else among the Malays, who certainly did not get it from Europe, or Alexander (Iscander) would have been their hero also. The number of good stories of all kinds which are common to the Orientals and Europeans, are more likely to have been brought home by peaceable travellers, than by the Crusaders. I suspect the Jew pedlars were the great go-betweens. They always went everywhere. All the world over you found Jew merchants and Jew physicians; wherever there is anything to be got, no danger deters a Jew from venturing. I myself saw two fellows at Evora, under the very nose of the Inquisition, who, if they had any noses, could not have mistaken their game. I knew the cut of their jibs at once; and, upon inquiring what they had for sale, was told — green spectacles. A History of the Jews since their dispersion, in the shape of a Chronological Bibliotheca, would be a very valuable work. I want an Academy established to bespeak such works, and reward them well, according to the diligence with which they shall be executed.

"The abuses, or main abuses, of printing, spring from one evil, — it almost immediately makes authorship a trade. Per-sheeting was in use as early as Martin Luther's time, who mentions the price — a curious fact. The Reformation did one great mischief; in destroying the monastic orders, it deprived us of the only bodies of men who could not possibly

be injured by the change which literature had undergone. They could have no *peculium;* they laboured hard for amusement; the society had funds to spare for printing, and felt a pride in thus disposing of them for the reputation of their orders. We laugh at the ignorance of these orders, but the most worthless and most ignorant of them produced more works of erudition than all the English and all the Scotch universities since the Reformation; and it is my firm belief, that a man will at this day find better society in a Benedictine monastery than he could at Cambridge; certainly better than he could at Oxford.

"You know I am no friend to Popery or to Monachism; but if the Irish Catholics are to be emancipated, I would let them found convents, only restricting them from taking the vows till after a certain age, as Catherine did in Russia; though perhaps it may be as well to encourage anything to diminish the true Patric-ian breed. The good would be, that they would get the country cultivated, and serve as good inns, and gradually civilise it. As the island unluckily is theirs, and there is no getting the Devil to remove it anywhere else, we had better employ the Pope to set it to rights.

"

William Taylor has forsaken the Critical, because it has fallen into the hands of ——, an orthodox, conceited, preferment-hunting, Cambridge fellow; such is the character he gives of him. My book will suffer by the change. The Annual is probably delayed by the insurrection among the printers. Authors

are the only journeymen who cannot combine, — too poor to hold out, and too useless to be bought in.

Vale!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"April 3. 1805.

"Dear Wynn,

"I have been grievously shocked this evening by the loss of the Abergavenny *, of which Wordsworth's brother was captain. Of course the news came flying up to us from all quarters, and it has disordered me from head to foot. At such circumstances I believe we feel as much for others as for ourselves; just as a violent blow occasions the same pain as a wound, and he who breaks his shin feels as acutely at the moment as the man whose leg is shot off. In fact, I am writing to you merely because this dreadful shipwreck has left me utterly unable to do anything else. It is the heaviest calamity Wordsworth has ever experienced, and in all probability I shall have to communicate it to him, as he will very likely be here before the tidings can reach him. What renders any near loss of the kind so peculiarly distressing is, that the recollection is perpetually freshened when any like event occurs, by the mere mention of shipwreck, or the sound of the wind. Of all deaths it is the most dreadful, from the circumstances of terror which accompany it.

* An allusion to this shipwreck is made in a published letter of an earlier date: which of the two dates is correct, I cannot at this time ascertain.

"I have to write the history of two shipwrecks,—that of Sepulveda and his wife, which is mentioned by Camoens, and that of D. Paulo de Lina, one of the last Portuguese who distinguished himself favourably in India. Both these, but especially the first, are so dreadfully distressful, that I look on to the task of dwelling upon all the circumstances, and calling them up before my own sight, and fixing them in my own memory, as I needs must do, with very great reluctance. Fifteen years ago, the more melancholy a tale was the better it pleased me, just as we all like tragedy better than comedy when we are young. But now I as unwillingly encounter this sort of mental pain as I would any bodily suffering. . .

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M. P.

"April 6. 1805.

"Dear Wynn,

"I am startled at the price of Madoc, not that it is dear compared with other books, but it is too much money; and I vehemently suspect that in consequence, the sale will be just sufficient for the publisher not to lose anything, and for me not to gain anything. What will be its critical reception I cannot anticipate. There is neither metre nor politics to offend any body, and it may pass free for any matter that it contains, unless, indeed, some wiseacre should suspect me of favouring the Roman Catholic religion.

"And this catch-word leads me to the great po-

litical question. A Catholic establishment would be the best, perhaps the only, means of civilising Ireland. Jesuits and Benedictines, though they would not enlighten the savages, would humanise them, and bring the country into cultivation. A petition that asked for this, saying plainly we are Papists, and will be so, and this is the best thing that can be done for us, and for you too,—such a petition I could support, considering what the present condition of Ireland is, how wretchedly it has always been governed, and how hopeless the prospect is.

"You will laugh at me, but I believe there is more need to check Popery in England than to encourage it in Ireland. It was highly proper to let the immigrant monastics associate together here, and live in their old customs; but it is not proper to let them continue their establishments, nor proper that the children of Protestant parents should be inveigled into nunneries. You will tell me their vows are not binding in England; but they are binding *in foro conscientiæ;* and, believe me, whatever romances have related of the artifices of the Romish priesthood, does not, and cannot exceed the truth. This, by God's blessing, I will one day prove irrefragably to the world. The Protestant Dissenters will die away. Destroy the Test Act and you kill them. They affect to appeal wholly to reason, and bewilder themselves in the miserable snare of materialism. Besides, their creed is not reasonable; it is a vile mingle mangle which a Catholic may well laugh at. But Catholicism having survived the first flood of reformation, will stand, perhaps, to the end of all things. It would yield either to a general

spread of knowledge (which would require a totally new order of things), or to the unrestrained attacks of infidelity,—which would be casting out devils by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils. But if it be tolerated here, if the old laws of prevention be suffered to sleep, it will gain ground, perhaps to a dangerous extent. You do not know what the zeal is, and what the power of an army of priests, having no interest whatever but that of their order. . . . . You will not carry the question now; what you will do in the next reign, Heaven knows! . . . . .

"Coleridge is coming home full of Mediterranean politics. Oh, for a vigorous administration! but that wish implies so much, that Algernon Sidney suffered for less direct high treason. If I were not otherwise employed, almost I should like to write upon the duty and policy of introducing Christianity into our East Indian possessions, only that it can be done better at the close of the Asiatic part of my History. Unless that policy be adopted, I prophesy that by the year 2000 there will be more remains of the Portuguese than of the English Empire in the East.

"We go on badly in the East, and badly in the West. You will see in the Review that I have been crying out for the Cape. We want a port in the Mediterranean just now; for if Gibraltar is to be besieged, certainly Lisbon will be shut against us. Perhaps Tangiers could be recovered; that coast of Africa is again becoming of importance: but above all things Egypt, Egypt. This country is strong enough to conquer, and populous enough to colonise;

conquest would make the war popular, and colonisation secure the future prosperity of the country, and the eventual triumph of the English language over all others. It would amuse you to hear how ambitious of the honour of England and of the spread of her power I am become. If we had a king as ambitious as Napoleon, he could not possibly find a privy-counsellor more after his own heart. Heaven send us another minister ——! How long is the present one to fool away the resources of the country? If I were superstitious, I could believe that Providence meant to destroy us because it has infatuated us.

"God bless you!

R. S."

In later life my father held very different opinions, respecting the effect likely to be produced by the establishment of Popery in Ireland, to those which he expresses in the foregoing letter. Increased knowledge of the past history of that country, and of its present condition, dispossessed him altogether of the idea that the Roman Catholic Church, set up in her full power, would be the most effective means of civilising and humanising the people. He affirms, indeed (Colloquies with Sir Thomas More, vol. i. pp. 289.), after quoting Bishop Berkeley's admirable exhortation to the Romish priests, that "had they listened to it, and exerted themselves for improving the condition of the people, with half the zeal that they display in keeping up an inflammatory excitement among them, the state of Ireland would have been very unlike what it now is, and they themselves

would appear in a very different light before God and man." "They might," he continues, "have wrought as great a change in Ireland as the Jesuits effected among the tribes of Paraguay and California;" and this "without opposition, without difficulty, in the strict line of their duty, in the proper discharge of their sacerdotal functions . . . . to the immediate advancement of their own interests, and so greatly to the furtherance of those ambitious views which the ministers of the Romish Church must ever entertain, that I know not how their claims, if supported by such services, could have been resisted." . . . . . "I would not dissemble the merits of the Romish clergy," he continues, "nor withhold praise from them when it is their due; they attend sedulously to the poor, and administer relief and consolation to them in sickness and death with exemplary and heroic devotion: Many among them undoubtedly there are whose error is in opinion only, and whose frame of mind is truly Christian, and who, according to the light which they possess, labour faithfully in the service of the Lord. But the condition of Ireland affords full evidence for condemning them as a body. In no other country is their influence so great, and in no other country are so many enormities committed."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"April 13. 1805.

"Dear Grosvenor,

"There is a translation of Sallust by Gordon. I have never seen it, but having read his Tacitus, do

not think it likely that any new version would surpass his, for he was a man of great powers. It is not likely that Longus Homo, or any other Homo would pay for such a translation, — because the speculation is not promising, every person who wishes to read Sallust, being able to read the original. . . . .

. . . . There are some Greek authors which we want in English, Diodorus Siculus in particular; but why not chuse for yourself, and venture upon original composition? In my conscience I do not think any man living has more of Rabelais in his nature than you have. A grotesque satire *à la Garagantua* would set all the kingdom staring, and place you in the very first rank of reputation. . . . You ask if I shall come to town this summer? Certainly not, unless some very material accident were to render it necessary. I do not want to go, I should not like to go, and I can't afford to go; solid reasons, Mr. Bedford, as I take it, for not going. This is an inconvenient residence for many reasons, and I shall move southward as soon as I have the means, either to the neighbourhood of London or Bath. When that may be, Heaven knows; for I have not yet found out the art of making more money than goes as fast as it comes, in bread and cheese, which these ministers make dearer and dearer every day, and I am one of that class which feels every addition. However, I am well off as it is, and perfectly contented, and ten times happier than half those boobies who walk into that chapel there in your neighbourhood, and when they are asked if I shall give sixteen pence for tenpenny-worth of salt, say yes, — for which the Devil scarify

them with wire whips, and then put them in brine, say I.

". . . . . I shall endeavour to account for the decline of poetry after the age of Shakspeare and Spenser, in spite of the great exceptions during the Commonwealth, and to trace the effect produced by the restorers of a better taste, of whom Thomson and Gilbert West are to be esteemed as the chief, before the Wartons, with this difference, that what he did was the effect of his own genius, what they, by a feeling of the genius of others. This reign will rank very high in poetical history. Goldsmith, Cowper, Burns, are all original, and all unequalled in their way. Falconer is another whose works will last for ever. . . . . .

God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M. P.

"April 16. 1805.

"Dear Wynn,

"Madoc has reached Keswick. I am sorry to see Snowdon uniformly mis-spelt, by what unaccountable blunder I know not. It is a beautiful book, but I repent having printed it in quarto. By its high price, one half the edition is condemned to be furniture in expensive libraries, and the other to collect cobwebs in the publishers' warehouses. I foresee that I shall get no solid pudding by it; the loss on the first edition will eat up the profits of the second, if the publishers, as I suppose they will, should print a second while the quarto hangs upon hand. How-

ever, after sixteen years it is pleasant, as well as something melancholy, to see it, as I do now for the first time, in the shape of a book. Many persons will read it with pleasure, probably no one with more than you; for whatever worth it may have, you will feel, that had it not been for you, it could never possibly have existed. It is easy to quit the pursuit of fortune for fame; but had I been obliged to work for the necessary comforts instead of the superfluities of life, I must have sunk as others have done before me. Interrupted just when I did not wish it, for it is twilight — just light enough to see that the pen travels straight, — and I am tired with a walk from Grasmere, and was in a mood for letter-writing; — but here is a gentleman from Malta with letters from Coleridge. God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"June 25. 1805.

"Dear Wynn,

"Madoc is doing well; rather more than half the edition is sold, which is much for so heavy a volume; the sale, of course, will flag now, till the world shall have settled what they please to think of the poem, and if the reviews favour it, the remainder will be in a fair way.* In fact, books are now so dear, that

* "I think Southey does himself injustice in supposing the Edinburgh Review, or any other, could have hurt Madoc, even for a time. But the size and price of the work, joined to the frivolity of an age which must be treated as nurses humour children, are sufficient reasons

they are becoming rather articles of fashionable furniture than anything else; they who buy them do not read them, and they who read them do not buy them. I have seen a Wiltshire clothier, who gives his bookseller no other instructions, than the dimensions of his shelves; and have just heard of a Liverpool merchant who is fitting up a library, and has told his bibliopole to send him Shakspeare, and Milton, and Pope, and if any of those fellows should publish any thing new, to let him have it immediately. If Madoc obtain any celebrity, its size and cost will recommend it among these gentry — libros *consumere nati* — born to buy quartos and help the revenue.

You were right in your suspicious dislike of the introductory lines. The *ille ego* is thought arrogant, as my self-accusing preface would have been thought mock modesty. For this I care little: it is saying no more, in fact, than if I had said, Author of *so-and-so* in the title-page; and, moreover, it is not amiss that critics who will find fault with something, should have these straws to catch at. I learn from Sharpe very favourable reports of its general effect, which is, he says, far greater than I could have supposed.

". . . . This London Institution is likely to supply the place of an Academy. Sharpe has had most to do with the establishment, and perhaps

why a poem, on so chaste a model, should not have taken immediately. We know the similar fate of Milton's immortal work in the witty age of Charles II., at a time when poetry was much more fashionable than at present."—*Letter from Sir W. Scott to Miss Seward, Life*, vol. iii. p. 21.

remotely I may have had something, having conversed last year with him, upon the necessity of some association for publishing such extensive national works as booksellers will not undertake, and individuals cannot; — such as the Scriptores Rerum Britan., Saxon Archaiologies, &c. &c. Application will be made to Coleridge to lecture on Belles Lettres. Some such application will perhaps be made to me one day or other; indeed, a hint to that effect was given me from the Royal Institution last year. My mind is made up to reject any such invitation, because I have neither the acquirements nor the wish to be a public orator. . . . . .

"Your letter has got the start of mine. I believe I told you that both Lord and Lady Holland had left invitations for me with my uncle to Holland House, and that he had offered me the use of his Spanish collection. Did Fox mention to you that I had sent him a copy of Madoc? I did so because Sharpe desired me to do so, who knows Fox; and I prefaced it with a note, as short as could be, and as respectful as ought to be. I am much gratified by what you tell me of the poem's reception; there was a strong and long fit of dejection upon me about the time of its coming out. I suspected a want of interest in the first part, and a want everywhere of such ornament as the public have been taught to admire. And still I cannot help feeling that the poem looks like the work of an older man — that all its lights are evening sunshine. This would be ominous if it did not proceed from the nature of the story, and the key in which it is pitched, which

was done many years since, before Thalaba was written or thought of. . . . .

God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M. P.

"July 5. 1805.

"Dear Wynn,

"Fox has written me a very civil letter of thanks; saying, however, that he had not yet had time to read the poem, so his praise can of course only have been of detached parts.

"They tell me the duty upon foreign works is not worth collecting, and that it might be repealed if any member thought it worth his while to take up the matter. If this be the case, I pray you take into consideration the case of your petitioner; there is now a roomful of books lying for me at Lisbon, all of use to me, and yet literally and truly such the major part, that were they to be sold in England, they would not yield the expense of the duty. I cannot smuggle them all in, to my sorrow, being obliged to get over only a box at a time, of such a smuggleable size that a man can easily carry it, and this I cannot do at London, where I wish to have them. What my uncle has sent over, and fairly paid for, has cost about a hundred pounds freight and duty — the freight far the smaller part. Now, if this barbarous tax can be repealed, whoever effects its repeal certainly deserves to be esteemed a benefactor to literature, and it may also be taken into the account that you would save me from the sin of

smuggling, which else, assuredly, I have not virtue enough to resist. Seriously, if the thing could be done, it would be some pride to me, as well as some profit, that you should be the man to do it.

. . . . . I have just received a good and valuable book from Lisbon, the Barbarorum Leges Antiquæ, well and laboriously edited by a monk at Venice, in five folios, the last published in 1792. An excellent work it appears to me, upon the slight inspection I have yet given it,—one that by its painful and patient labour reminds one of old times; such a book as monasteries do sometimes produce, but universities never. My books here are few but weighty, and every day I meet with something or other so interesting to me, that a wish arises for some friend to drop in, to whom and with whom I could talk over the facts which have appeared, and the speculations growing out of them. What profit the History may ultimately produce, Heaven knows; but I would not for anything that rank or fortune could give, forego the pleasure of the pursuit.

"The story of Pelayo, the restorer of the Gothic or founder of the Spanish monarchy, has been for some time in my thoughts as good for a poem. I would rather it were a Portuguese than a Spanish story; that, however, cannot be helped. The historical facts are few and striking, just what they should be; and I could fitly give to the main character, the strong feelings and passions which give life and soul to poetry, and in which I feel that Madoc is deficient. There is yet half an hour's daylight, enough to show you what my ideas are upon the

subject, in their crude state. Pelayo revolted because his sister was made by force the concubine of a Moorish governor, or by consent; and because his own life was attempted by that governor, in fear of his resentment, he retreated to the mountains, where a cavern was his stronghold; and from that cavern miraculously defeated an army of unbelievers: the end is that he won the city or castle of Gijon, and was chosen king. There are for characters, Pelayo himself; the young Alphonso, who married his daughter, and succeeded to his throne; Orpas, the renegade archbishop, killed in the battle of the Cave; Count Julian; his daughter Florinda, the innocent cause of all the evil, who killed herself in consequence; and, lastly, King Rodrigo himself, who certainly escaped from the battle, and lived as a hermit for the remainder of his days. If I venture upon machinery, of all subjects here is the most tempting one. What a scene would the famous Cave of Toledo furnish, and what might not be done with the ruined monasteries, with the relics and images which the fugitives were hiding in the woods and mountains! I forgot to mention among the historical characters the wife of Rodrigo, who married one of the Moorish governors. Monks and nuns (the latter not yet cloistered in communities), persecuted Arians, and Jews, and slaves, would furnish fictitious and incidental characters in abundance. You see the raw materials; if English history could supply me as good a subject, it would on every account be better, but I can find none. That of Edmund Ironside is the best, which William Taylor

threw out to me as a lure in the Annual Review; but when an historical story is taken, the issue ought to be of permanent importance.

"I have never thought so long at one time about Pelayo as while thus talking to you about him; but Madoc does not fully satisfy me, and I should like to produce something better — something pitched in a higher key. A Spanish subject has one advantage, that it will cost me no additional labour of research; only, indeed, were I to chuse Pelayo, I would see his cave, which is fitted up as a chapel, has a stream gliding from it, and must be one of the finest things in Spain. God bless you!

The following letter requires some explanation. The Butler and his man William, to whom allusion will from this time occasionally be found in the letters to Mr. Bedford, were mythological personages, the grotesque creation of his fertile imagination. The idea, which was a standing jest among the intimate friends of the originator, was of a hero possessing the most extraordinary powers; with something like the combined qualities of Merlin, Garagantua, and Kehama, to be biographised in a style compounded of those of Rabelais, Swift, Sterne, and Baron Munchausen.

Mr. Bedford, however, was not to be induced by all his friend's entreaties to immortalise the Butler, and no relic of him consequently remains, except the occasional allusions in these letters, which, although they can afford amusement to but few persons, are

inserted here as showing the extreme elasticity of my father's mind, which delighted to recreate itself in pure unmitigated nonsense, — a property shared in common with many wise men.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Greta Hall, July 6. 1805.

Butler denotes the sensual principle, which is subject or subordinate to the intellectual part of the internal man; because every thing which serves for drinking or which is drunk (as wine, milk, water), hath relation to truth, which is of the intellectual part, thus it hath relation to the intellectual part: and whereas the external sensual principle, or that of the body, is what subministers, therefore by *Butler* is signified that subministering sensual principle, or that which subministers of things sensual.

"Read that paragraph again, Grosvenor. Don't you understand it? Read it a third time. Try it backwards.

"See if you can make any thing of it diagonally. Turn it upside down.

"Philosophers have discovered that you may turn a polypus inside out, and it will live just as well one way as the other. It is not to be supposed that Nature ever intended any of its creatures to be thus inverted, but so the thing happens. As you can make nothing of this Butler any other way, follow the hint and turn the paragraph inside out. That's a poozzle.

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